DARSHAN

THE VISION OF LIGHT

by

ROY EUGENE DAVIS

CSA PRESS, PUBLISHER
LAKEMONT, GA. 30552

Copyright © 1971
CSA Press

Standard Book Number 87707—075—X

Printed in the United States of America by CSA Press,
Lakemont, Georgia 30552

Table of Contents

Foreword	7
1. My Search for Truth	9
2. Yoga, Science of Soul-Realization	27
3. The Guru-Disciple Relationship	41
4. Masters and Avatars	54
5. With Paramahansa Yogananda	69
6. Meditation, the Inward Way	95
7. Reincarnation, Astrology and Destiny	119
8. The Final Overcoming	137
9. Kundalini in Action	146
10. Sex and the Spiritual Life	160
11. Observations of a Truth Teacher	179
12. A Prophecy of things to Come	200

Foreword

A literary offering of this nature is an opportunity for the author to share experiences, impart useful information and comment upon a number of important matters. In *Darshan, The Vision of Light* I have related personal experiences, set forth a philosophy and a way to spiritual success and tried to relate the whole to events of our time.

In another twenty or thirty years I will, no doubt, write a companion volume to this initial "spiritual autobiography." By then the world will bear little resemblance to ours of today. We will have surely solved the major threats to the welfare of man, become a global community and will see the *new era* firmly established on a foundation of understanding and cooperation.

External progress and social betterment must be the result of an *internal* transformation of mind and consciousness. A new type of man is emerging; the superman or God-man, so long predicted by seers and sages.

I tender this book to all readers; present and future. And to my friends, associates, students and disciples around the world. I am especially glad for the opportunity of paying tribute in these pages to certain people who, over the years, have been instruments of the Divine and who have generously shared their insights and realizations.

Roy Eugene Davis
March 1971

Chapter One

MY SEARCH FOR TRUTH

I am convinced that all rational people are engaged in a search for truth about life. Whether we say that we are looking for meaning, searching for purpose or striving to come into a harmonious working relationship with the world in which we live — it comes down to the same thing — *we want to know.* A wise person will not settle for partial understanding or a comfortable philosophy but will continue until final knowledge is attained.

By *truth* I refer to *that which is so* concerning the nature of Spirit, God, the soul and the universe. Objective scientists and subjective mystics may seem to be approaching the goal from opposite directions but, really, their purposes are the same and both must eventually come to similar observations. One thing we know: knowledge results in freedom. Every spiritual teacher has testified to this fact. There are basic principles which underlie all of nature and when man comes into a realization of these principles his doubts are settled, his questions answered and his problems solved. This is what the spiritual quest is all about.

It is the contention of *seers* that the soul is already, in its essence, whole and self-complete. But, for some

reason we have become identified with externals and have, therefore, *forgotten* the truth concerning our real nature. On the spiritual path, then, we are not attempting to grow, develop, acquire knowledge or evolve from a lower to a higher condition; we are really trying to awaken from the *dream* of limited existence. To the degree that we awaken it may seem that we are growing or evolving when, in fact, we are *recalling* what has always been true. One is reminded of the words of Jesus; "And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was."(St. John 17:5)

This may seem to be a fantastic assumption for one who is still conditioned to believe in a God apart from the soul but the idea is central to all mystical doctrines. Vedic seers have long taught that Spirit is the only reality and appears as all that manifests while, at the same time, It remains (for the most part) aloof from the relative worlds. It is the cause of the production of the worlds, is appearing as all things and is animating all forms. This grand cosmic activity is but a matter of Life acting upon Itself. In our quiet moments we know this must be so. But, often, we allow ourselves to identify with the conditioned mind which is loaded with false data and we have occasional doubts. We sometimes wonder, too, if we have a right to know the final truth about life.

There are some who say, "Man was not meant to know the secrets of God." Such people tend to remain involved in role-playing; performing rituals and pretending to be religious. Others cling to immature concepts of God; thinking God to be either a father, a mother or whatever aspect is agreeable to the subconscious. By remaining comfortable in their ignorance such people are relieved of the responsibility, for the time-being, of making personal effort to awaken to the realization of what is really true. My personal view is that the purpose of life on this planet is self-realization. I feel that each of us can know

for ourselves what the great prophets and spiritual leaders have long asserted we can know.

My own search has transcended traditional and conventional boundaries. I was born March 9, 1931 at Levittsburgh, Ohio, the second son in a family of five children; two boys and three girls. My father, Dewitt Talmage Davis was named after a well known midwest evangelist because his mother had hopes that he might become a minister. Father worked as an inspector for Republic Steel Company for a number of years and then bought a forty-five acre farm on which we children were raised. He also built up a small trucking business, hauling coal, slag and soil as business demanded.

My mother, Eva Lee Carter Davis, while not overly demonstrable, saw to the needs of her husband and children. She died, unexpectedly, at forty-six years of age from a heart attack.

My outer life followed the usual pattern of one living in a rural community; farm chores, public school, regular attendance at the nearby United Brethren Church and interaction with family members and neighborhood friends. To my knowledge no one in my family or of my acquaintance in the community showed any great interest in other than *normal* affairs. I had a *private* life, as many youngsters do, which took place in my mind and consciousness. I examined, questioned and analyzed the attitudes, beliefs and behavior of people with whom I came in contact. It seemed to me that most people then were content to be accepted in the community, keep body and soul together and, if religious, tried to live a "good Christian life." But, of course, being a Christian meant attempting to believe in what the church taught, avoiding major errors and trying to become fit for a future heavenly reward; if not immediately after death then, surely, after the *resurrection.*

Most fundamentalists are, by nature, inconsistent. Well do I recall a minister preaching of heaven versus hell one Sunday morning — only to speak, a few days later

concerning a member of the congregation who had "gone to glory," while he and those assembled were surely aware of the *unsaved* (in line with their religious beliefs) condition of the recently-deceased. In our church during revival-times it seemed that often the same people went forward to be saved time and time again. Ministers were usually more emotional than logical during their sermonizing and members of the youth group seemed more interested in socials than in soul-searching. To be fair I must say that many in the congregation were sincere and did the best they knew how to do.

From about ten years of age I inwardly felt the *call* to the ministry. But, during the early years there was no clear plan in my mind concerning the direction or, the pattern, my life was to take. When I read the *Bible* I identified, not with the *sinners* but with the prophets, with Jesus and the apostles. At the center of my being I *knew* I was Divine and that I was destined for an expansive and far-reaching ministry; but it took several years for the early intimations to become clear realizations. A few years ago, after an evening meeting in Fort Lauderdale, Florida my wife, Carolyn, and I joined Mr. and Mrs. John Rankin for an after-lecture snack at the local *pizza* parlor. John was, at that time, minister of Unity Church of Fort Lauderdale. It was our first meeting and he asked, "Roy, how did you get started in this work?" I replied, "When I was ten years old I identified strongly with Jesus and the prophets and felt myself to be the same as they." Without so much as a double-take John said, "Who changed your mind?" Of course, no one has — but I thought his response was perceptively subtle. We had a good laugh over the matter.

In the high school library I found books dealing with world religions, psychology, human behavior and of man's explorations of the world both within and without. The first book to bring the subject of *yoga* to my attention was *The Lives of a Bengal Lancer*. Written by Francis Yeats-Brown, this book contains fascinating stories of the au-

thor's military adventures as well as unique descriptions of his experiences with several yogis. At the back of the book is to be found a concise explanation of yogic philosophy. As I read, memories of a previous incarnation in India were stirred.

During my senior year in high school I was confined to bed for five months due to having become ill with rheumatic fever. In that period of time I had ample opportunity to read, think, meditate and, often, to pray. Whenever I needed fresh inspiration it seemed to come through the printed word; a magazine article or a book. One such item was an illustrated story in *Life* telling of Sri Ramana Maharshi, a great sage of south India. As I gazed at the saint's photograph I was lifted into a serene state of consciousness and bathed in inward peace and assurance. I have wondered since then, how many people have been stirred and set upon the spiritual path, perhaps without conscious knowledge, because they *chanced* to be exposed to similar photographs and articles dealing with the lives of enlightened souls?

The book which played the most important role in my life is Paramahansa Yogananda's *Autobiography of a Yogi.* Having been a health enthusiast I subscribed then to several magazines dealing with exercise and diet. Scanning a back-issue of Bernarr MacFadden's *Physical Culture* magazine I saw a large advertisement offering Yogandandaji's book. Ordering the book by mail I eagerly awaited the mailman's rounds a couple of weeks later. When the *Autobiography* finally arrived I read it through from cover to cover; then read it again.

In his fascinating major work my guru set forth the story of his life and revealed many fascinating experiences with scores of saintly men and women. As I gazed upon the photographs of Yoganandaji and his line of gurus I felt such an inner rapport that I inwardly accepted the author as my guru; though the formal aspect of the relationship was not to materialize until later.

During my early efforts at meditation I experienced

calmness of mind and easily perceived the various lights at the *third eye* center; whirling lights and constantly changing geometrical patterns in brilliant colors. I meditated during afternoon hours sitting in lotus posture in the privacy of my upstairs bedroom. At night, while awaiting sleep, I looked within and beheld panoramic visions. In the back of my mind, always, was the steady thought that I would, before long, meet my guru in person.

In the fall of 1949 I left home via Greyhound Bus to Miami, Florida. A conscious-mind thought might suggest that I should have gone straight to California. In retrospect, however, Florida seems to have been interwoven with my earth-destiny as I have been drawn here time and time again. So, perhaps, it was only *right* that I come to Florida for a short while in those early years.

My first plan, upon arriving in Miami, was to earn money for the trip to California. I spent the first few weeks there at the Palmetto Hotel, a nondescript transient hostel which offered most reasonable rates; something like two dollars a day, as I recall. For two weeks I worked as a short-order cook in a small suburban resturant but, since the pay was little I quit and *sought* more gainful employment.

My second job was less successful; I traveled, with a group of young men, from town to town in south Florida selling magazines. It took only a few days to prove to me that door-to-door selling was not my bag; one must persist and one must *believe* to succeed at it. To put it bluntly, I did not believe in my product and I lacked the necessary persistence.

I agree with guidance. I feel that when we are determined to reach a goal or accomplish our purpose that forces work on sub-surface levels to assist us. While making morning rounds in the suburbs of West Palm Beach the "lady of the house," upon whose door I had knocked, said, "No, young man — I don't want any magazines. But, do come in and have a snack, won't you?" I would — and did.

To this day I do not know the name of this kindly soul. But, if she or any of her friends should read these pages, I want them to know how appreciative I have always been for her generosity that fall morning.

After some conversation she asked me about my future plans. I explained that I was headed for California to meet my guru. Showing no surprise at all she led me to her library. There, on well ordered bookshelves, were hundreds of books dealing with Theosophy, yoga and the various occult sciences. She informed me that it was "in this very room" that William Walker Atkinson wrote some of his works. Mr. Atkinson produced easily a score of books, both under his given name and under his pen-name, *Yogi Ramacharaka.* Much of his literary output is copyrighted as of the first decade of this century and all of his books enjoy a wide sale, even today, because of his clear and direct writing style.

The essence of my hostess' thoughts was: "What are you waiting for? Why not get on with it?" That evening, fired with new conviction, I told Mr. Wilson, the crew manager, of my intention. No doubt, one of the reasons for his obvious show of relief was the fact that I had sold not more than four subscriptions during the previous three weeks. On the other hand, he did reveal a genuine concern for my welfare.

Early the next morning I stood by the main highway leading north from Tampa. (We had driven across the state the previous evening.) I stood, neatly dressed in my one suit, suitcase beside me, with my right thumb signaling the passing drivers. The first ride was long in coming and that night was spent in an orange grove. A wood fire helped to ward off the cold. After that I was fortunate; day followed day with rides to Pensacola, New Orleans, Houston, El Paso (and Juarez), Tucson, Riverside and, finally, Los Angeles!

As I recall I did not write Yoganandaji that I was coming although, during the months prior to leaving home I had taken the Self-Realization Fellowship lessons

by mail. Since I had explained my situation the Fellowship did not charge me for the lessons but sent them free.

In the *City of the Angels* is to be found representative teachers and groups of every major (and minor) religious and philosophical point of view. Los Angeles has often been referred to as the *Benares* of the west. Now known as Varanasi, this city is considered to be the most holy city of India and it is here that one finds a blending of people and religion. I spent the first day at the main public library going through the stacks in the religious department. Little did I think then that, years later, my own books would be among the thousands of other titles there.

One reason for my going to the library was to have a place to rest while I planned my next move. I needed a few hours to get used to the idea of my actually being in Los Angeles and so close to my destination — the meeting with Yoganandaji.

Evening came quickly as I poured through the many books at my disposal. During that first day I read through some of Master's books that I had not, at that time, read before and also, through back issues of *Self-Realization Magazine*. At the invitation of another "knight of the road" I spent my first night in the city at the famed Fifth Street Mission. Along with hundreds of other men I sat through the obligatory sermon, was run through the shower and given a sparse meal. But, the bed had clean linens and was the second such good opportunity for sleeping I had had during the previous week; the night before I spent at the Salvation Army in Riverside.

I was not, at any time "down and out — with no place to turn." During these weeks I could have wired my father for money to ease my situation. Pride, I suppose, was involved — as was my inspiration that "God would provide." Many times, without my having to ask (which I vowed to myself, I never would) whenever I needed food or shelter *it was there.* These early experiences were to

prove helpful in later years. I have always felt that the same *Intelligence* which inspires us and sends us forth will provide if we are open and receptive to guidance.

The next afternoon, after a few more hours at the library, I took a streetcar to the foot of Mt. Washington Estates in the Highland Park district of Los Angeles. A home-bound motorist gave me a lift to the top of the hill. When I walked onto the grounds the first person to meet me was Ralph Sherman, who lived in the small house near to the entrance. Since his was the first door I saw, I knocked. Ralph promptly took me to the main building, introduced me to the dozen or so monks who were gathering for the evening meal and invited me to have dinner. The plain vegetarian fare was more than satisfactory! The room was quiet — as the monks ate in silence. But, it was not a cold silence. Love was there — and a *presence.*

After the meal Kriyananda, who seemed to be the senior monk, invited me to the main lobby just up the stairs from the dining hall. There, after settling ourselves, and going through the usual social rituals, we talked about Master, my reasons for being there, the aim of the organization and of the guru-disciple relationship. *Kriyananda* means bliss (ananda) through the practice of *Kriya.* This was the name taken by Donald Walters some years after our initial encounter, when he was initiated into the Swami Order in India; whence he had gone on organizational work. Well educated, with a mastery of several languages, Kriyananda eventually became vice-president of the Self-Realization Fellowship. Years later, because of some organizational change, he left the Fellowship to found his own work, *Ananda Cooperative Community,* in northern California.

As Kriyananda and I talked that first evening I gazed about the large room which was tastefully furnished with heavy chairs, couches and various art objects. Near the doorway which led to a narrow hall hung a portrait of Yoganandaji in the pose known to millions; the youthful

photo (lithographed, in color) which is used in current advertisements. A small vase of roses rested on a table beneath the portrait.

Suddenly, Kriyananda's eyes lit up and a smile crossed his face: "Master is coming," he exclaimed, "Let's greet him!"

With this combined announcement and suggestion he led the way to the hall door. The muted rumble of an elevator mechanism could be heard in the bowels of the building; then it ceased and the door was opened.

Paramahansa Yogananda, accompanied by two women disciples, stepped from the elevator and walked the few steps to where Kriyananda and I stood waiting. This was more than I could have possibly expected; to be able to meet my guru within such a short time after my arrival. Yet, thinking back, the whole sequence of happenings — from my early contact with yogic science to the moment now under discussion — seemed to be a matter of *timing* and of *happenings* taking place according to a pre-designed plan. Yoganandaji wore a dark blue suit, a blue overcoat and a light blue hat. A white scarf was visible at the neck. His most prominent features were his eyes and his noble, gentle, face. *Spiritual power* was at once evident.

Greeting Kriyananda, Master then turned to me and shook hands. I noted his manner of courteous respect, which I was to observe later in his relationships with others. His first words, after welcoming me, were: "How old are you?"

I told him: "Eighteen, sir." He was silent, looking deeply into my eyes as though searching. Then, with a gesture of blessing — the touch of his right hand at my forehead — he said simply, "I'll see you again." With that, he walked across the room, went out to where his car awaited him and was driven off into the December night.

It was Master's habit to bless people by touching them at the third eye center. In this way the guru activates subtle energies in a receptive person; these forces then

begin to flow through the *occult centers* in the spine and brain.

Kriyananda next took me to the dormitory where most of the resident monks were already getting settled for the night. Some were sitting in a meditative pose, contemplating inward realms; others were quietly attending to personal matters. The room was overcrowded and it was evident that some monks would have to sleep on the floor. Disciples from the Encinitas retreat in southern California had come to Mt. Washington that day in order to be present for the weekend activities; a daylong meditation was to begin the next morning, an annual Christmas Eve service. Most of the monks seemed to be in their twenties or thirties although there were several who were even younger than myself. A few of the older men had private rooms in another part of the building and elsewhere on the property.

So it was that I met my guru — on the 23rd day of December, 1949. It was the beginning of almost four years practice and practical application of yogic principles and would lead, eventually, to my becoming a teacher of this sacred science. I had come into the pattern advised by wise men centuries before. Vedic seers taught that young people should be given spiritual training in the presence of a true guru; then they should have a family life and fulfill social obligations, educate their children and finally withdraw from the world to contemplate the mystery of God.

It seems today that we have, for the most part, overlooked the importance of spiritual training where young people are concerned. Spiritual training is not to be confused with religious education. The emphasis today seems, all too often, to be on purely surface matters instead of true initiation into the *occult sciences.* There is inner knowledge, which if acquired, would give meaning and purpose to the lives of all people. An examination of the attitudes demonstrated by the young of today, on a world-wide basis, is evidence enough that real spiritual

training has been neglected by those in responsible positions. Therefore, the new generation is seeking on its own for meaning to life and an altogether honest relationship with each other and their environment. In recent years when I have talked at colleges and universities I have noted an eagerness to learn among the students and a receptivity which is not common among many in the older generation.

The following morning, after a light breakfast, I joined the more than two hundred assembled devotees in the hall of the main building. A mood of joyous anticipation pervaded the hall. Master was due "any minute" to come in and begin the meditation service. Starting time was nine o'clock a.m. and the proceedings would last, I was informed, eight hours. Glancing at my watch I noted that it was already past the starting hour. A hushed conversation taking place between two nearby disciples gave me a possible clue for the delay. "Master is in samadhi in his room," one disciple explained. "Mr. Lynn is with him now."

It seems that Master had been meditating in preparation for the day's occasion and had gone beyond the sense of time. Mr. J. J. Lynn, one of Yoganandaji's most spiritually advanced disciples, was a successful businessman as well as an accomplished yogi. For years my guru referred to his disciple as *Saint Lynn* and all who had the privilege of meeting this radiant man felt the name to be appropriate.

A little later, Mr. Lynn and Master came down from my guru's upstairs quarters and joined the waiting disciples. Many had come a considerable distance for this annual contact with Master so their quiet enthusiasm was understandable. I had read of God-intoxicated saints but this was my first sight of one in the flesh. Yoganandaji was luminous! There is no other way to describe the light and power which he emanated. A powerful current flowed from his eyes as he gazed about the room, taking in everyone

and everything; now and then giving a nod of recognition and welcome. Yet, there seemed a remoteness about him, as though he was not completely in tune with his physical environment. I recalled my impression some months later when a disciple showed me a personal letter he had received from Master. Our guru had written: "These days I perform necessary tasks on earth . . . with my eyes always open to heaven."

In contrast to the previous evening when I first met Master, this day he wore an ochre robe, symbol of the swami order, and his hair hung down over his shoulders. With Mr. Lynn at his side Yoganandaji walked slowly down the aisle of the chapel and took his seat on the dais. The rest of us took our places; the monks on the front rows at the left side of the chapel and the nuns on the right. Visitors filled the seats to the back. Behind Master was a simple altar upon which rested framed photographs of Jesus, Babaji, Lahiri Mahasaya, Sri Yukteswar and Yoganandaji. Candles flickered in the dimly lit room and a faint fragrance of incense could be discerned.

"God is closer than your breath, closer than your heartbeat." Master's rich voice carried the *reality* of God to all in the room with a single sentence. Absorbed in the Divine he was an instrument through which the Power flowed.

Scriptures teach that when one realizes his God-nature he is God in expression. We are all divine but not all consciously know this. We are frequently unaware of the workings of the inner life but, when we awaken and become conscious of our soul-nature then Spirit expresses in fullness and glory. As Jesus said, "He who has seen me has seen the Father."

Master spoke of God's love, of the importance of devotion on the spiritual path and of the necessity of remaining in tune with the Infinite at all times. His emphasis was upon devotion and willingness to surrender all for the infilling of Spirit. Also, at this time, he men-

tioned various disciples by name and expressed his appreciation for their service to him and the work and remarked on their spiritual progress.

Using a conveniently positioned harmonium, a hand operated reed instrument with organ-like tones, Master began to lead the group in devotional chanting. Following his lead we turned our attention to the third eye center and, with feeling, chanted: "O God Beautiful," "I Have Made Thee Polestar of My Life," "In the Temple of Silence" and others. Over and over we chanted, going more deeply within as concentration increased, trying to capture the essence of the words and to *spiritualize* the chants with our own divine realization.

Devotional chanting, whether practiced by individuals or groups, has the effect of clearing the mind, focusing the attention and of making possible *superconscious* experience. The true purpose of chanting is not to please God or fellow truth-seekers; it is for the purpose of becoming more aware of our unrestricted nature.

After chanting we sat for a long time in deep meditation. Since this was my first attempt at extended meditation there were many occasions when it was only by sheer will power that I was able to persist. When I recall this occasion I am reminded of Yoganandaji's oft-mentioned thought: "Where others leave off in meditation — there I am just beginning." The practice of certain meditation techniques helped me to calm the mind and relax the body, somewhat. After three hours a short rest was announced and most of the disciples wordlessly left the chapel. After thirty minutes or so, we again assembled to continue the inward quest.

Master talked of Krishna and Radha. Krishna is one of the central characters in the *Bhagavad-Gita* — the eighteen chapter treatise extolling the virtues of yogic science — as well as a key figure in other popular religious literature of India. Krishna is considered to be an *avatar,* a Divine Incarnation. Radha was Krishna's consort

and many folk tales describe their special relationship as the interplay of Spirit and nature; masculine-electric and feminine-magnetic. As our guru talked of Krishna's majesty and of Radha's love we sat in serene calmness. Suddenly, Mr. Lynn, sitting at Master's side, slumped in his chair — his face revealing his ecstatic condition. Before long, he regained his composure.

Late in the afternoon the meditation session was concluded and Master stood by the doorway to bless each devotee in turn. For each he had a special word, a touch of the hand and the warmth of his personality.

We had been granted *darshan,* the vision of Light. Loosely defined *darshan* refers to the *blessing of divine sight* which results from attunement with a saint or God-realized person.

More than the initial contact with the guru is necessary before one fully awakens and completely comprehends the subtle truths of life. It takes time for the centuries-old accumulation of debris to be cleared from mind and consciousness. I knew this day, however, that my feet were firmly set on the path and it would only be a matter of time and personal application before major spiritual gains would be realized.

Success on the spiritual path is a matter of carefully directed attention. Few realize the subtle processes which must be undergone. Our over-identification with externals and the consciousness-clouding effect of *maya* prevents us from knowing what we are. This is why a serious student on the path should be armed with essential knowledge and be prepared to engage in a disciplined program of action to become liberated.

People who are identified with *maya* (the fabric of nature; time, space, light particles and energy) to the extent that they are no longer aware of their soul nature, are deluded. Therefore, they suffer and perform unwise actions, use the mind without intelligent planning and fail to see the true order of things. The Buddha once declared:

"If all the tears that had flowed from human eyes since the beginning of creation were gathered together, they would exceed the waters of the ocean." Yet, suffering is the result of lack of understanding. God has not willed man to suffer; it is the natural effect of the basic cause — delusion.

Early Indo-Aryans sought, as all intelligent men do, for solutions to common problems. They asked, as the Vedas indicate: "What is it, by the knowing of which, everything in the universe can be known?" In time, a clue was discovered in this quest for the solution of the mystery of knowledge. Hindu philosophers observed that by knowing the nature of a substance one automatically knows the nature of everything made of that substance. In other words, we know the nature of everything made of wood once we know the nature of wood; the nature of everything made of gold once the nature of gold is known and, so forth. These early seekers examined the manner in which the worlds were formed and came to an understanding of the nature of the worlds. They perceived a basic *substance* which is formed as an infinite variety of things. This basic stuff they termed *maya.* But, *maya* is, after all, Spirit modified so that It can appear and express as the manifest worlds.

We cannot say that the world is unreal; it is real in that it is Spirit appearing *as.* Our lack of clear understanding constitutes, for us, the sense of illusion. One characteristic of *maya* is that it is form-building; it forms about mental patterns. Another characteristic is its truth-veiling effect on a soul. When souls identify with *maya* too much they forget their real nature and become lost in the dream. Of *maya* are the worlds formed and the cosmic drama made possible. Individuals can awaken and *see through* this process and, in this manner, overcome the world.

The ancients also wondered if there was a First Principle underlying external phenomena, as well as man

himself — and, if so, were the two the same? Such questions formed the subject matter of their philosophical systems and discussions were held in conferences and at special meetings; at ashrams and in homes in various communities. They even worshipped, with elaborate rituals, the sun and its planetary bodies as well as various deities. However, those with discrimination soon came to realize that everything existing in time and space surely is doomed to pass away — even the gods.

So sages turned their attention away from externals and began to probe the inner worlds within themselves. Through disciplined meditation they discovered the realm of the mind to be the root of external happenings. They discovered Universal Mind but soon realized that this, too, must be a modification of *something* else. This *something* is Spirit; absolute, unconditioned and the *cause* and *sustainer* of all appearances.

Readers may wonder if *truth* can be known or if there is a possibility of self-deception. Vedic seers lay down three criteria for proof of discovery. Scriptural authority (the words of illumined people), reasoning (with clear powers of discrimination and with accurate data on hand) and personal experience are said to point to the same conclusions. One may believe what is set forth in scripture and still not really know for himself. One may arrive at a satisfactory solution to the problem through the use of intellect but be in error because of insufficient data or because the mental machinery does not work properly. Or, again, one might experience direct revelation but be unable to support such a revelation through the exercise of reason or may not be able to compare his inner perceptions with those of others who have claimed similar insights.

Not all people are *ready* to embark upon the spiritual path. Such people may lack the desire to know the truth about life or they may not yet be possessed of intuitive perception. Many do not see the reason for a conscious

search for truth and prefer to live according to conventional ideals. Even if one has not yet felt the *call* but has not canceled out the possibility of eventually getting on the path, the way can be prepared; one should prepare for spiritual awakening by attending to personal matters in a positive frame of mind and avoid thoughts, feelings and actions which might tend to complicate his life.

Who can really know why some people awaken and yearn to know the truth about life? I used to wonder why I came into this work so fully, when nothing in my early environmental experience would indicate this path. I can only conclude that it is destiny — the emergence of a predetermined pattern as a result of one's previous experience on earth and decisions made then, as well as on the astral plane, before coming here.

Because of my early training under Yoganandaji I am sometimes asked if I am a Christian. I see the esoteric doctrine as revealed in all world scriptures and endeavor to live a Christ-like life. But, I do not identify myself with any denomination, sect or religion. The need to belong to a group or a system is natural until we awaken to the place where we become universal in outlook. Only after a patient investigation of Eastern Philosophies and much prayerful examination of the Bible did I discover the key to scripture and come to the realization that all God-realized men teach the same basic truths.

If I am pressed to label my religion I must assert that it is the *Eternal Religion,* the basic truths which never change and which, therefore, make up the *foundation* and *impart the vital power* to all known religious movements.

In these opening pages I have shared with you a brief summary of my early years. The following chapters will be devoted to more specific information having to do with self-discovery, accounts of enlightened people I have known and observations as a result of more than two decades of active work in this field.

Chapter Two

YOGA, SCIENCE OF SOUL REALIZATION

Until shortly before the start of this century the science of yoga was little known to people of the west. Today *yoga* is a household word; almost every literate person has, at least, heard of it.

To me, the beautiful thing about the science of yoga is that it contains a message of hope and imparts a definite methodology which anyone can use on the spiritual path. Regardless of one's present level of understanding or degree of awareness, under proper supervision, one can benefit from the application of yogic principles. In theory, yoga is not a religion, so one can belong to any religious organization or to no organization at all. However, as the student progresses on the path a deeper understanding of the nature of God, man and the world will naturally be gained. And this is the point of it all.

Westerners need not become "orientalized" in order to practice yoga. Yogic science has come from the East but this is no reason for western people to become half-baked psuedo-orientals. One must be what one is, and function within the framework of current cultural patterns. Of course, some will drift off into fantasy and try to escape from everyday responsibilities by assuming a *different* and *more spiritual* posture. But, this will not be true yoga

and will not lead to enlightenment. Mystics of all ages and cultures have practiced a form of yoga — discipline to control the mind and awaken the intuitive sense. It has just so happened that India preserved ancient scriptures which contain priceless information and which we now have at our disposal.

The word *yoga* is derived from the Sanskrit root *yug* (to join); therefore yoga practice is often described as *that method by which the soul attains union with God.* More specifically, what really happens is that inner forces become balanced and the sense of intuition awakened so that one becomes aware of his true nature; which was never really anything other than *it is* — except in the misunderstanding of the facts.

Another, and perhaps more accurate, definition of yoga is: *that discipline which enables one to put an end to the fluctuations of the mind.* Or to be direct — *that discipline which enables us to bring to a standstill the image-forming tendencies of the mind.*

There are various systems of yoga: each designed to fill a need and to be practiced according to the capacity and temperament of the individual. It is not necessary for a person on the spiritual path to practice all yogic disciplines. Too often one will practice various yogic systems with the expectation of results; results which never come. They have not been told that no mental or physical cause can result in a spiritual effect. Nor have they been told that a *guru* is necessary for progress on the path.

Hatha Yoga is, by far, the most widely known of all the systems. Hundreds of thousands of people practice the *asanas* (postures) in the privacy of their homes or with groups which meet at a central point in their respective communities. The majority of those who thus participate usually report an improved sense of well-being, better muscle tone, mental clarity and a positive attitude toward life. For many people *Hatha Yoga* is the beginning of a far deeper quest.

As a discipline which involves various bodily and mental controls, *Hatha Yoga* enables a person to note almost immediate positive effects. Central to the practice is the regulation of breath — and through this, control of vital forces in the body. The term for this latter practice is *pranayama.* While often loosely defined as "breath control" or "breathing exercises" the correct definition can be easily arrived at by an examination of the word *pranayama* itself. *Prana* refers to the subtle vital forces in nature (which are active in the physical body) and *yama* means regulation or, control. The word *hatha* is taken from two roots, *ha* (sun) and *tha* (moon). *Sun* and *moon* symbolically refer to the flowing of currents along the spine which can be regulated through the practice of disciplined breathing methods.

The whole point of *Hatha Yoga* is to prepare a person for higher yogic practices. Once the body is purified and vital forces are properly directed the mental activity becomes still: then inward contemplation can be practiced. Unfortunately there are many students who are engaged in *Hatha Yoga* exercises who never go beyond the *mechanical* routine of exercise. Properly practiced *Hatha Yoga* should be an experience in awareness; the *mental equivalent* of each pose should be assumed before the actual follow-through. After the routine of postures and pranayamas a quiet meditation should follow.

Bhakti Yoga, the way of love and devotion to God and man is another discipline. This eventually leads to realization of the *Oneness* of all life. "Perfect love casts out fear." Perfect communication removes all belief of difference.

Then we have *Karma Yoga*; the performance of useful work while maintaining the attitude that the *Infinite* is expressing through us so that we have no compulsive desire for the effects of our efforts. In this way we express creatively, doing the work at hand but without selfish motivation. Also, we work without thought of

either praise or blame. We do what is right, as our guidance indicates and in due time we neutralize or modify, karmic impressions to such an extent that we are no longer compelled by them. In this way we break the chain of *causation* and live by grace, ever in tune with the Infinite Will. No more do we think in terms of future attainment; we live always in the awareness of our immortal nature.

Raja Yoga is defined as the *royal way* to enlightenment, utilizing as it does the best principles of all yogic systems and placing the emphasis upon concentration and meditation. The classic text which sets forth the methods of practice is *The Yoga Sutras of Patanjali.* Some years ago I wrote an extensive commentary on the *Yoga Sutras* which was published under the title, *This Is Reality.* I wrote the manuscript over a period of two months of deep meditative effort; during the time of this writing I had many worthwhile dreams, visions and meditation-experiences. I felt the presence of my line of gurus as I put the book together and it was more than a literary attempt — the time given to this book was a revelation to me as I *opened* myself to the flow of direct perception and guidance. Patanjali was an un-named sage, one of many who used this then common reference. He took from complex mass of data that which was most useful and wrote findings down in a slim volume composed of brief statements and affirmations which were designed to be meditated upon. The whole truth cannot be fully explained and this is why seers have written scriptures, sutras and aphorisms — so that serious seekers can read, ponder and, in time, gain their private insights. All authoritative sources consider *Patanjali's* synthesis to be the best guide to soul realization.

For those possessed of keen insight there is *Jnana Yoga,* the way to clear realization through the proper use of discrimination or the right use of intelligence. With this approach we can cut through all appearances and dis-

tractions and get to the heart of the matter. Of course, many whose minds are cluttered with useless or incorrect data cannot practice this yoga with any degree of success until they have undergone certain preliminary preparations and purifications. An outstanding example of a Jnana Yogin was the sage of Arunchula, Sri Ramana Maharshi. Awakening to the realization of his real nature while yet in his teenage years this great saint remained at his ashram in South India for the rest of his life — just *being* what he was. And, by thus *being,* attracting the world to his presence. When Rajendra Prasad, a representative of Mahatma Gandhi asked for a message to take back to Gandhi, Maharshi said, "What message is needed when heart speaks to heart? The same *Shakti* (Divine Power) that is working here is also working there."

One of the Maharshi's disciples, Paul Brunton, wrote of his experiences with his guru and published many books dealing with various aspects of yogic philosophy which have been read by millions. Arthur Osborne is another writer who has shared of his observances. One of the latter's books is *The Collected Works of Ramana Maharshi.* The sage wrote very little, preferring to teach in silence.

Another great Jnana Yogin was Shankara, born around the year A. D. 686 at Kaladi, a small village of Western Malabar, in southern India. By the age of ten he was an academic prodigy, having memorized the major scriptures and written commentaries on them. Not long after that Shankara was initiated into yogic science by Govindapada and within a short time attained complete realization. He wrote many books and poems and debated with the leading teachers of his day. He stressed the essential truth known to seers: "Absolute existence and the soul are one." What he meant by *real* is that which does not change or cease to exist. The *universe* (manifest world), being subject to modification, cannot be a source of eternal security. The world may be real to sense per-

ception and real in the sense that it is *consciousness appearing* in form — but it has no existence other than consciousness; no separate existence.

A few of Shankara's writings have been published in English and deserve to be studied by serious students of the spiritual path. One masterly treatment is *Self-Knowledge,* with translation and commentary by Swami Nikhilananda of the New York City Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Center. Opening the above mentioned text at random my eyes fall on verse sixty-eight: "He who, renouncing all activities, worships in the sacred and stainless shrine of the soul, which is independent of time, place, and distance; which is present everywhere; which is the destroyer of heat and cold, and the other opposites; and which is the giver of eternal happiness, becomes all-knowing and all-pervading and attains, hereafter, Immortality." Another excellent book is Shankara's *Crest-Jewel of Discrimination* which is published by Vedanta Press of Hollywood, California and appears under the joint-authorship of Swami Prabhavananda and Christopher Isherwood.

Many exponents of *Jnana Yoga* do not concern themselves with any other systems or methods, feeling them to be unnecessary or — important only to those who are caught up in the illusory worlds. If one feels himself to be in bondage he must work his way out of his limiting conditions by using the tools at hand, according to his understanding. *But, if one knows that limitation does not exist, there is no point in pretending that it does.*

Central to yogic science is the teaching that in the body there is a latent force refered to as *kundalini.* Because this force is aroused as a result of the practice of specific methods, the term *Kundalini Yoga,* is sometimes used to designate this system; composed of postures, mudras (postures practiced in conjunction with pranayama) and concentration techniques. This is not really a separate system. It is but a matter of emphasis.

It is natural for yoga teachers to stress the system which seems best from their own experience. A wise teacher will stress the system which seems best from his own experience. A wise teacher will stress that which the student requires rather than build a cult around his own particular preference. Systems, techniques and methods are but tools to get the job done. When the goal of self-realization has been achieved the tools can be laid aside.

Little intelligible material is available to the person who seeks information concerning this force known as *Kundalini.* The word is, of course, Sanskrit, and means the *coiled, dormant power* residing in nature. Because of the subtle character of this force and because — when it is fully active — one possesses wisdom, it is sometimes referred to as the *serpent power.* While some yoga teachers impart techniques with which the student is supposed to work directly with *Kundalini,* others suggest devotion, meditation and the company of the guru as the best means to arouse this force. I can testify to having experienced the gradual awakening of *Kundalini* shortly after I met my own guru. In an enlightened person *Kundalini* is active so that when a disciple comes into attunement with such a person his own forces are stirred into motion; then he is taught how to properly direct them.

I do not think it wise for strenuous exercises to be taught to (or practiced by) groups of yoga students for the purpose of awakening *Kundalini.* The practice of *Hatha Yoga* is safe for all to practice, after proper instruction has been received. The more intricate yogic sciences require a true guru-disciple relationship.

Kundalini is sometimes awakened at the time of the student's initiation into meditation practice. Before initiation the student is instructed in basic philosophy, meditation methods and how to adjust the mental attitude and regulate the pattern of daily behavior. Some gurus impart a pranayama such as *Kriya Yoga* while others give a different technique; a method for hearing the *sound*

current (Aum), directing attention into the *third eye* or the *crown chakra* or the transmission of a *mantra* (a word imbued with power) which the student can contemplate during meditation so that attention can be directed from gross to subtle levels. This latter method is best known because it is stressed by Maharishi Mahesh Yogi and has been widely taught by him and his representatives. Because of my association with Paramahansa Yogananda I teach a number of meditation techniques which are part of the *Raja Yoga* system.

Experiencing the awakening of *Kundalini* as a result of contact with a true guru is considered by many teachers to be the most natural. This is known as *Siddha Marga* (The Path of the Perfected Ones). When the force begins to move, if the disciple is quiet and does not try to make anything happen (and does not try to suppress natural internal movements of *Kundalini*), then it ascends little by little, chakra by chakra, according to the *readiness* of the person and works naturally to open heretofore closed channels and results in a progressive adjustment and harmonizing of internal energies as well as having the effect of altering states of consciousness.

There is nothing to fear in this natural activity of *Kundalini.* One should lead a well ordered life, be devoid of ego and be in tune with the guru. Some people acquire unusual abilities as a result of inner awakening. They may become clairvoyant, proficient in astral travel, gain the ability to know what cannot be known through mere sense perception and become skilled in the use of mental telepathy. Soul abilities or psychic powers are the sometimes side effects of spiritual awakening but yoga teachers are adamant in pointing out that as long as a person is conscious of *using* such powers he should not do so. That is, if one naturally does whatever is right for an occasion then ego is not involved and one merely fulfills his destiny. Therefore, one should not try to develop powers or abilities. There are many people who have suddenly

acquired psychic ability and who mistakenly assume that it is a "gift from God" which must be used for the good of others. Unfortunately many such people are not spiritually awakened and do not know how to properly use their powers.

There are many *prophets, healers, readers of akashic records* and *astral travelers* who capture the attention of the gullible but who are not capable of leading people to spiritual freedom. Some people with *unusual* abilities are sincere in their efforts to help others but often become examples of the blind leading the blind. There are others who use their abilities to make money, attain a measure of fame or manipulate people.

Now and then we come across an enlightened man or woman who can seemingly perform genuine miracles. They have inner guidance, however, and their extraordinary ability is demonstrated for the purpose of bringing people to the realization of the truth about life. Yoganandaji often said, "I could perform miracles and draw multitudes but I know the greatest miracle is the transformed heart of one who seeks God."

It is often asserted, usually by those who are promoting their own system of mind control, thought power or prayer therapy — that yoga practice is not suited to the western mind and temperament. I cannot agree. Concentration, meditation, right use of intelligence and intuition has nothing to do with whether a person was born in the United States, Europe or Asia. It is true that some people are more subjective than others and it is true that popular philosophies differ but when we deal with the true nature of the soul and the way to spiritual insight we are dealing with individuals. I know of thousands of people in the west who have gained insight through intelligent practice of yoga methods. Yoganandaji said that he found more receptive students in this country than he found in his native land.

Many today, from all walks of life, are practicing

meditation with enthusiasm. They attend classes, read books and even learn the basic principles by watching specially prepared television shows. This is a natural trend and was forseen by teachers of the occult tradition many decades ago. As the masses awaken it is natural that individuals begin to investigate scientific and practical systems which offer definite and predictable results.

As we have seen, yogic science offers a *way* or a combination of *ways* to healthy-minded living and true spiritual experience. Perhaps the best approach is to adopt the yoga of synthesis; taking the best from all systems, with the emphasis upon *Raja Yoga;* the way to enlightenment through the proper practice of meditation. The secret of success in the practice of meditation is to learn to *look* and *see.* But, I will discuss this in more detail in another chapter.

In the matter of diet most yoga teachers suggest natural foods, preferably organically grown. Meat is excluded for practical reasons. There have been to be sure, many enlightened people who were not vegetarians and who did not pay much attention to diet. The most common reason for suggesting a vegetarian diet is that man is considered, because of the structure of his teeth, length of intestinal tract (compared with meat-eating animals) and his natural inclination (if one has not been "trained" to eat meat), to be designed to take fruits, vegetables, nuts and grains.

There is no point in becoming a faddist, of course, but a sensible approach to proper nutrition would seem to be in order if we are to enjoy good health. If we use common sense and become acquainted with the simple rules of diet, exercise and recreation we will find that we possess greater enthusiasm for life and that our mental machinery works better.

Some people refuse to include meat in their diet because they do not want to be a party to the killing of animals, even though they may be far removed from the actual scene of slaughter. To carry this conviction to the obvious

limit one should also refuse to use items made of leather or any animal by-product. Some who eat meat and use leather items assert that by so doing they are allowing the animal life-cycle the opportunity to continue and follow its own evolutionary pattern.

We now know that even plants respond to human emotion and that nothing we take into the body, unless it has been processed and preserved, is dead. Yoga teachers suggest that we maintain the body with as little injury to other living things as possible. A vegetarian diet is not an absolute necessity for one on the spiritual path because we are talking about *that* which is beyond all relative manifestation. But, for those who would like to get away from the meat-eating habit the suggestion is to leave off pork and beef from the daily menu. Then, in time, exclude chicken and fish — moving from complex to the more simple life forms. The easiest way, without trying to justify the attempt, is to eliminate all animal products from the diet, and make sure food intake is sufficient and nutritionally sound.

The use of drugs to expand the awareness or clear the mind is not suggested, or approved of, by most gurus. Patanjali, in his *Yoga Sutras,* stated: "The soul powers are attained by birth, chemical means, use of sound and, asceticism (concentration)." In other words — soul awareness can be a matter of a person's previous attainment, or drugs *can* be used, the result of proper contemplation of *Aum* or the result of proper success in meditation practice. The use of drugs is usually not recommended because such use often leads to psychological dependence upon them or even to physical harm. Then, too, many seemingly superconscious perceptions which come through a drug-induced experience are illusory in nature — therefore, a waste of time.

There can be no doubt but that many people who are today seriously involved in the practice of meditation would not have gotten interested if they had not taken one of a

number of the available drugs and as a result been shown areas of mind and consciousness which were previously inaccessible to them. And, though it is seldom discussed, some yoga teachers are skilled in the preparation of herbs which, when ingested, have a hallucinatory effect on a person. Such teachers sometimes give a mild drug, usually during a special ritual, on a one-time basis to let the disciple have an experience of beyond-the-mind perception.

Fasting, certain pranayamas and the use of music and light can also induce special effects in the mind and consciousness. However, a wise person on the spiritual path is not looking for effects, thrills or "kicks." He is seeking self-knowledge and this clear perception is a matter of a simple understanding of the true nature of things.

One who is successful in his practice of yogic disciplines will, in time, accept such discipline into his life pattern so easily that he will not be conscious of *practicing* yoga. Some people make their practice a very special thing and forget that the goal is soul-realization. There are many who are skilled in the postures and faithful in the practice of pranayama who have not yet had suitable results from meditation practice. And there are those who are regular in meditation but who do not really accomplish very much in the way of becoming truly aware. One can become just as "hung up" and involved in the mechanical routine of yogic practice as with any other system. In fact, some become so self-centered as a result of over-concentration on diet, exercise and the observance of rules that they bind themselves more closely to mind and body instead of becoming cosmic conscious.

Early in my quest for truth I began the practice of various yogic disciplines. I easily became proficient in the practice of the postures and experimented with the various pranayamas. Then, after I met my guru I learned of the practical application of *Bhakti Yoga, Karma Yoga* and *Raja Yoga.* Properly understood and practiced, yogic

disciplines bring us back to natural living and afford us an opportunity of seeing into the heart of *Reality.*

At seminars and retreats in different parts of the United States I have found hundreds of students who have responded quickly to pure yoga practice. Although there are usually people from all age groups in attendance, more and more young people are coming into this philosophy. Perhaps it is because they do not have so much to *unlearn* or because, as I suspect, they have gone this route before in previous embodiments in other lands and at other times. I know, for instance, as far as my early years are concerned — when I became acquainted with the science of yoga it was thought I was but being *reminded* of what I already knew to be so. In two years time, after I had met my guru, I was ordained by him and began to teach as one of his representatives.

For years, as I have talked before large audiences in cooperation with established metaphysical organizations, I have taught basic yogic principles, without giving any Sanskrit references and have been told, afterwards, that the message was "pure truth" and fully in accord with New Thought teachings. The reason for this is simple to understand; all enlightened men teach a system of yoga — a way to Self-knowledge. The label is not important. The important thing is usefulness.

Not all yoga teachers are qualified to be gurus. Among the ranks of swamis, yoga teachers from India, as well as yoga teachers who are of our own culture, there are enlightened souls, well-meaning but unenlightened souls and, now and then, one runs across a teacher who is in it strictly on a business basis. They will serve. And, as long as the student is reasonably bright and is not easily taken in by surface appearances — the more the message is spread the better it will be for mankind.

One should bear in mind that the practice of yoga is not an escape from responsible living. In fact, one should become more effective as a person and find a

greater and more harmonious working relationship with people and projects as a result of proper practice of any and all systems of yoga.

We should constantly bear in mind the thought concerning that which *is* (and will ever be) *true* about ourselves: *We are immortal — we are impervious to external influences — we are the essence of Life Itself. Our various disciplines are but for the purpose of uncovering the real nature.*

Chapter Three

THE GURU-DISCIPLE RELATIONSHIP

When a person longs for enlightenment and reaches that place on the path where he is ready for soul awakening then Spirit, as the guru, comes into his life. A *guru* is, literally, *the dispeller of darkness.* The guru-disciple relationship is personal and lasting. From an objective point of view the relationship is: Spirit as the guru, playing that role, to awaken Itself as the disciple.

Yoganandaji would sometimes say, when being referred to as "guru": "God is the only guru — I am but His servant." Still, he was conscious of his role and worked unceasingly for the improvement and upliftment of all who came to him. As is befitting a true guru Master came to serve, educate, give and awaken. Through his thoughts, words and deeds he set the example and showed the way to spiritual freedom. We saw in him the light and glory of an unrestricted soul.

Anyone who can be instrumental in awakening soul consciousness in another and who can give unerring

guidance on the path is qualified to be a guru. And, almost without exception, such a person will be a disciple of an illumined master and will be able to trace his spiritual lineage back through time, through a line of gurus. My connection is through Paramahansa Yogananda and his line of illumined gurus.

There are, of course, many lines of gurus because more than just a few illumined masters are required to meet the needs of the billions of men and women on this planet who are in a spiritual quandary. All true gurus are serving a basic purpose and one should not make the mistake of assuming that some enlightened masters are *greater* than others. My guru often said, "The disciples may argue but the masters get along very well together."

It is taught that a *flow of force* passes through the line of gurus to the disciple who is *en rapport.* When the disciple has been accepted by his guru and remains in tune — through devotion, practice of prescribed discipline and telepathic communion — he receives the blessings which flow to him. We need not think of being dependent upon the guru. Disciples are not slaves. No guru desires such an attitude. We should think in terms of our contact with the guru as our contact with the Infinite. Master used to say, "Tune in with me and you will tune in with God." Rather a startling statement to fall upon the ears of a new student or to be heard by a person who was not versed in the tradition of the guru-disciple relationship with its subtle and far-reaching implications.

Some teachers say that man does not need a guru. And, to be sure, there have been a few enlightened men and women who have experienced soul awakening without the physical presence of a guru. Most of these people are fortunate in that they were born into this world with but a small degree of delusion as a result of previous spiritual attainment and, at a suitable time, reawakened to their *natural condition.* It is natural for man to be awake to his soul nature; it is unnatural for him to be deluded. It

has been my observation that these rare souls who awakened without the guru's assistance in his incarnation still affirm the usefulness of the guru-disciple relationship for the average person on the path. It seems to be the intellectual investigators, rather than illumined souls, who stress that man can find his own way to spiritual freedom. Even if the guru-disciple relationship is not entered into on a formal basis it is evident to me that most people who make progress on the path have, at one time or another, benefited from contact with a person who was more advanced in spiritual awareness.

At this point it might be well for me to explain my position relative to my ministry and my line of gurus. I became a disciple of Paramahansa Yogananda early in 1950 and was initiated into *Kriya Yoga* by him in the summer of that year. In November, 1951 he ordained me as a minister of his organization, although my papers were not presented until March of the following year, two days after his passing, which was my twenty-first birthday. In the fall of 1953 I voluntarily left the Self-Realization Fellowship to pursue an independent ministry.

I am not in conflict with the teachings of his organization but it seems that my way in this incarnation is not the way of one who remains in seclusion in a monastic situation but, rather, the way of one who lives in the world to set an example and to reach those who would not otherwise be informed of this message. Some people come to serve while remaining out of the mainstream of social activities while some have, as their *ministry,* a different pattern.

When Yoganandaji left his body it was announced by representatives of his organization that the line of gurus ended with his passing and that, henceforth, the *teachings would be the guru.* This concept is contrary to tradition, to the natural working of Spirit and to the conclusions of those who fully understand the nature of the guru-disciple relationship. I feel that the line of gurus continues. Babaji

has many disciples, Lahiri Mahasaya has many disciples and Sri Yukteswar has many. Yoganandaji personally initiated more than one hundred thousand. When a true disciple comes to the place in spiritual understanding where he can share his realization and assist others on the path he is fit to be guru. The line, therefore, must branch out in many directions from each master. Are we to suppose that the flow of power stops at a certain point? Are we to believe that the infusion of Spirit ceases? Every yogic text is adamant on this essential point: printed words cannot be a guru — the guru must be a living person. And, while the guru-disciple relationship continues, even when the guru leaves this world: those who have not had the privilege of physical contact must usually be awakened by the touch and presence of a physically embodied representative.

If a person, for instance, feels a real attunement with Yoganandaji or any other master who has left this plane and feels strongly that such a master is his real guru, he can still seek initiation from one of the master's representatives without in any way being compromised. No real guru ever tries to get a disciple to change his spiritual relationship but, rather, he will act as the guide for the disciple while suggesting that the latter remain true to his own guru. A disciple can make his attunement with his guru, even if the guru is no longer in the flesh, but may need practical instruction in certain matters having to do with spiritual practices and conduct in the world — for this he often needs personal assistance.

For instance, Yoganandaji is my guru. Not *was* — *is*. My experience with him was when I was but a young man and as a renunciate monk. Later, when I began to teach as an independent worker in the field there were certain things I had yet to learn; creative use of the mind, public speaking, the art of counseling and the practical application of basic principles in relationship to many areas of normal everyday living. For advice on how to get

along in the world I went to experts; read their books, talked with them in person and observed them in action. But, I repeat, Yoganandaji remains my guru; from the others I received a different kind of assistance: the benefit of their experience, reinforced by their spiritual consciousness.

I suggest strongly that students and disciples of Indian gurus study basic metaphysical books written by contemporary truth teachers in order to learn how to apply inner realizations in a practical manner in daily life. There are altogether too many students of yoga who cannot relate to western cultural affairs and who, often, even lack common sense in the most obvious matters. The grace of the guru may assure us of spiritual attainment but there is no reason why we cannot use our natural abilities and powers of intelligence to handle ourselves in the world. Yoganandaji's guru Sri Yukteswar often said, "Spirituality is not dumbness!"

No guru will suggest that a disciple frequent seance rooms in order to *contact* the masters. Enlightened masters simply do not manifest through mediums. Nor do they suggest telepathy, trance, automatic writing or any other *psychic device* as a means to receiving *messages.* Those who experiment in these areas are, all too often, misled and confused. They are sure to find, in time, instead of making progress they are but living in an unrealistic mental realm of fantasy and wishful thinking.

After a person has been initiated he does not need the constant physical presence of the guru, as desirable as this might be. He can read the guru's words, scripture or other basic truth books. Then he can put into practice what he has learned, meditate and remain in tune with the Infinite.

I am not a guru to all who come to me. For those who have inwardly accepted me as their guru, I am. I know who I am and what my mission is and I know the *power* flows and that lives are transformed. Hundreds

of thousands of people see me as a truth teacher only — and this, also, is altogether good and worthwhile. The esoteric work is one thing, the outer work is another; both are necessary.

Even Jesus, according to the *New Testament* account, accepted initiation at the hands of John the Baptist; either because it was required or because he was conscious of fulfilling a preordained plan. After initiation he went into seclusion to become stable in his new expanded state of consciousness and to receive guidance concerning his ministry to come.

Some occult teachers feel that John and Jesus were, respectively, Elijah and Elisha of *Old Testament* mention; with John (Elijah) playing the role of guru and Jesus (Elisha) the role of the disciple. (See 11 Kings 2:9-14 and *The Gospel According to St. John* 1:32, 33.) Whatever one cares to make of this — the record of the outer drama is there to be examined.

I meet many people who are drawn to the study of occult matters who profess Jesus as their guru. One is entitled to this conviction, of course. But, I still feel that such a person should seek initiation and practical instruction from someone in the flesh. Then the *Bible* and the hidden message to be discovered there will be made clear and the true significance of the real teaching laid bare.

Central to the guru-disciple tradition is the fact that when a disciple is prepared the guru imparts a *force* which awakens a subtle energies in the disciple. This is literally *initiation* or *spiritual baptism*. One may study for years and gain a degree of understanding but until this awakening is effected no real advancement can be expected on the path. Regular study and various disciplines are but preparation for this mystic happening.

At initiation the guru usually gives a meditation method and then instructs the disciple in the practice of inward contemplation, once the energy is awakened in ths disciple it continues to move upwards. Eventually it activates the

vital centers in the cerebro-spinal passageway and becomes stable at the crown chakra. A few days after I met Yoganandaji I began to feel the working of *Kundalini* in the lower chakras. Gradually, through the various *centers* and in the head. When I conduct an initiation ceremony some people who are receptive also feel an inner stirring. Not all are conscious of the awakening at the time of initiation but, at a later time, when they are relaxed they become aware of movements throughout the nervous system. Gradually, they are able to *let* the current work, as it will, and eventually become more cognizant of it.

Once *Kundalini* is aroused one can *turn it on* and *turn it off* at will. When relaxed, just by thinking of this force one can begin to feel it surging, first from the lower chakras and then up through the higher ones. Sometimes one is filled with a sense of superhuman strength. Joy, then bliss, pervades the body. Sometimes, in the early stages, a person may feel that the experience is *too much* and then, by flicking a mental switch, the current can be coaxed to withdraw a bit. With practice one lets the current flow all the time and in this way the nervous system is purified and one becomes an *electric* personality. By being in the presence of others, when this current is surging in us, if they are responsive they will be stirred. No words or ceremony is required.

We cannot judge a guru's spiritual worth by whether or not he performs miracles or is outwardly dramatic in any way. The guru's function is to awaken souls and whatever other activity he may engage in or whatever personality traits he may exhibit; these are of lesser importance. Yoganandaji used to say, "I go through your souls every day." What he meant was: at certain times he would think of a disciple and then be able to know things about him; mental attitude, level of attainment, special problems or needs and the disciple's general condition. In this way he could then render assistance either within his own consciousness, telepathy, by letter or by verbal

instruction. A true guru is not limited by space or dimension — nor are we! This is the point; the guru wants us to become as he is.

There are many accounts of a guru's ability to aid a disciple at a time of need. Master would sometimes leave his physical form and go to the bedside of a disciple who was ready to pass from this world. He would make his presence known and take the disciple into the astral realms (to a level consistent with the disciple's level of awareness) and then return to his physical form. Sometimes he would tell disciples who were present, "Mr. Smith (whatever a person's name) just passed — I was there to help him." Later a report would come in informing the disciples of the outer facts of the case and the time of passing and the general circumstances would agree with what Master had confided earlier.

Sometimes a guru can work through the disciple's dreams. I have, at times, communed with Yogananda, Sri Yukteswar and other enlightened souls during a vivid dream which is more like an astral experience than an ordinary subconscious dream. Sometimes, of course, we do have dreams wherein the participants are projections of our own subconscious pictures. At other times we use dreams as a gate through which to project into astral realms. Then, too, a telepathic contact can form a dream sequence so that we receive guidance or have precognitive perceptions.

For instance, in September, 1970 I conducted a series of classes at the Unity Church of Dallas, of which Dr. Donald Curtis is the minister. On the first day of the series a Mr. Kumar Pallana and his wife introduced themselves to me, explaining that they had a *Yoga Center* in the city and inviting me to lunch the following day. I accepted their invitation and the following day met with them at their home in the suburbs and then went to visit their nicely appointed *Center.* While perusing the various titles in their book department I was attracted to one publi-

cation which told of the life and work of Swami Muktananda Paramahansa.

Kumar told me that Muktanandaji would be visiting the United States before long and would be in California in October, a few weeks distant. I made a mental note to visit the Swami if our paths crossed; *feeling they would.* In October I toured the west coast, lecturing in major cities and had forgotten that Muktanandaji would be in California. However, a friend and student, Richard Rosager, drove me from Orange to Los Angeles on the day of my first talk there. Before going to the hotel Richard suggested we take lunch at *HELP,* an organic-foods resturant in another part of the city. After lunch we visited the adjoining bookshop for a few minutes then, while walking to the parking lot, saw a poster on a bulletin board announcing a lecture to be given by Muktanandaji the following evening; which, by *coincidence,* was my only free evening.

Checking into the hotel we meditated for an hour or so. A telephone call came in from a brother disciple, Robert Raymer. After a few minutes, during which we exchanged news of our respective activities, Bob mentioned that Muktanandaji was his house guest during his stay in southern California. Knowing that the swami had an engagement the following evening I did not wish to intrude to the point of asking for a personal introduction. That evening, after my talk, a young man introduced himself as a disciple of the swami and suggested that I come out the next afternoon to meet him.

The concluding experience which, to me, was an indication that the meeting had *already been planned* on another level was a dream I had that night. I had read Muktanandaji's words concerning his spiritual attainment and the perception of inner light; however, one point was not quite clear. In the dream I talked with the swami and he explained just what he meant regarding that precise point.

The following afternoon Richard and I drove to Pacific Palisades to visit, along with twenty or so others who were there, with Muktanandaji. After a few minutes I was introduced to him and, through his interpreter, we had a mutually agreeable discussion concerning many subtle points having to do with inner perceptions. His explanation of the inner light was, *word for word,* exactly as it had been during the dream of the night before. We found our views concerning initiation and the inner activity of *Kundalini* to be compatible.

I would classify this happening as a *destined* one, with the dream experience an example of precognition. Little do we know the karmic and soul ties we have with others; sometimes we commune on levels so subtle that we never become conscious of them while, at other times, the inner attunement results in a *this world* encounter, to our benefit.

A guru sometimes *takes on* a portion of a disciple's karmic condition. This is accomplished as the guru becomes sympathetically attuned to the disciple through the use of a certain yogic method. Not all gurus take on karma; they prefer, instead, to *see through* a condition. By *seeing the nothingness* of a limiting *cause* the cause can sometimes be banished. Not all occasions of illness suffered by the guru are karmically incurred. Sometimes a guru, even though enlightened, becomes identified with *maya* just a bit, and reflects this temporary condition.

Master often told new disciples, "When you came to me God took fifty percent of your karma, I took twenty-five percent — the rest you have to work out for yourself." One may question such a precise estimation of responsibility. What happens is this: when a person comes into this work wholeheartedly he renounces his attachment to things and attunes himself to the *attracting current* of Spirit. That is, he begins to truly *repent* or return to the awareness of his real nature. At this time of *conversion* one drops a great load of karma; including

guilt, regret and the thought of undoing his total accumulation of mistakes of the past. Self-forgiveness and acceptance of a newer and higher way of life releases a powerful cleansing action through deeper levels of consciousness. The guru then works with the disciple; *seeing through* the disciple's temporary limitations to the *true nature*. He also imparts his *life* to the disciple and stirs the latter's own dormant forces into action. This also has a cleansing effect on the mind and consciousness. The disciple, through honest self-evaluation, meditation and selfless work for others rids himself of what is left of his karmic condition.

Sometimes immediate assistance is required and the guru can often give such help; if the disciple is consciously and subconsciously in agreement. This is something to remember. A guru's assistance does not end with initiation or verbal instruction and advice. Even if a disciple rejects the guru's help, the guru can do nothing else than give it anyway. The silent work done by the guru is seldom known or understood by the average person.

Dr. M. W. Lewis, one of Master's first disciples in the United States told of the following incident. When Master lived in Boston, shortly after he came to this country, he stayed in a modest hotel and Dr. Lewis would often visit him. During one such visit a telephone message came to Dr. Lewis. His wife informed him that their young daughter, at home, had suffered another attack (an undisclosed ailment). Master asked about the frequency of such attacks and then excused himself. He went behind a screened-off portion of the room, reserved for his private meditations. After some time he came back to the main part of the room, perspiration streaming from his face. He said simply, "She'll never have another one!" And she never did.

Master told his disciples whom he had authorized to give initiations, "Whenever you conduct *Kriya Yoga* initiation either I, or one of the gurus, will be there."

I can testify to the fact that when I am in tune during such an initiation service I am *aware* of my connection with my line of gurus. Frequently the new initiates are similarly *aware*.

J. Oliver Black of Detroit, Michigan told of how Master telephoned him and requested him to initiate two men who were coming from Latin America. Master was in seclusion, attending to writing and inner work. At the conclusion of their telephone conversation Master said, "I'll be with you during initiation."

When the two men got to Detroit Mr. Black invited them to his office. After instruction in the practice of *Kriya Yoga* the three of them sat in deep meditation. After a while Oliver *heard* a subtle sound off to one side. Looking there he saw nothing and so resumed his meditation. Again, the *sound* came (like the rustling of fine particles) and, this time, when Oliver *looked* he *saw* Yoganandaji's light body but at that time one of the men, overcome with devotion, began to weep and his companion felt a surge of electricity go through him. When Mr. Black returned to his home that evening a long distance call awaited him. It was Master, calling from California. With humor in his voice he said, "See, Oliver, I told you I'd be with you!"

In the ideal guru-disciple relationship there is perfect cooperation. The guru accepts the responsibility of showing the disciple the way to spiritual freedom and the disciple accepts the guidance of the guru. The relationship is one of mutual respect and continues through time, even from incarnation to incarnation.

I was once walking with Master during the sunset hour at his desert retreat. I ventured a question: "Sir, have I been with you before?" I *felt* the relationship but wanted verbal confirmation. He smiled and said, quietly, "How could you be with me now if you had not been with me before? Yes, you have been with me before and you will be with me many times again in the

future. You have much good karma and you only have one or two things to work out this time. So, be patient, meditate, stay in tune with God and gurus and serve others."

We have all asked, at one time or another, "How can I find my guru?" I can only say that when the time is right the contact will be made. Some travel to distant places and return disappointed. Others are *willing* to go to the ends of the earth and then find guidance which brings them into contact with their guru. If one has entered into the guru-disciple relationship before then it will be established again and again. If one has never had a guru, when he is ripe for awakening, he will be led to one. This is the age-old story and a never-failing phenomenon.

Not all gurus are men; there are many women who act as gurus. The Divine works through all expressions of Itself, although it does seem that more men play the guru role. Perhaps this has something to do with the male tendency to be more dynamic and outgoing. One of the more well known woman gurus is Ananda Moyi Ma, who has many ashrams throughout India and hundreds of thousands of devotees who see in her the full expression of one who is awake to her immortal identity.

Siddha Marga, the path of the perfected souls, is surely one of the fastest ways to full realization. May all who read these words know the blessing and the uplift of a true guru-disciple relationship.

Chapter Four

THE MASTERS AND AVATARS

Over the years so much has been written about masters, avatars, saints, gurus, secret brotherhoods and *behind the scenes* work for the good of the world by illumined people that I almost hesitate to add to the mounting accumulation of data. However, truth must be served, light must be shed and some myths should be exposed.

It is but seldom that we meet anyone with factual knowledge concerning the work of the masters. Much of the available written material is the result of various authors having made the claim of *receiving* information through telepathic means. Some information is, no doubt, accurate; each of us, at a deeper level, knows the truth. Sometimes this *knowing* filters to the surface mind but, usually, during the process of transcribing the information, the author's subconscious conditionings color the final result. Often, what is written down and offered to the world as the *inside story* is but a projection of the hopes and dreams of the author. Then, too, we cannot

rule out the fact that some people with careful design, write about subjects of which they have no understanding in order to further their career in the writing or teaching field. Some purposely write religious fiction in the hope that the reader, fascinated by the story, will at least gain some benefit as a result of being exposed to basic metaphysical principles which are interlaced with fanciful tales.

More than one occult organization claims inspiration and guidance as a result of the founder's telepathic communication with Himalayan masters, Tibetan mystics and secluded sages. Sometimes the claim is true, sometimes it is a planned lie, often, it is wishful thinking. What is one to believe? In this chapter I will offer some guidelines and a little information that I know to be authentic.

A person on the spiritual path eventually attains *salvation;* that level of understanding and inward realization where he knows himself to be a soul which is but using mind and body for a purpose. This is a positive step in the direction of ultimate liberation. Here one no longer knows restriction and is not compelled to act from subconscious conditionings or karmic patterns. There may be some karma to be worked out (neutralized) but one at this level lives in tune with the Infinite at all times and is literally free; no longer under any compulsion.

The next stage of awakening is *mastership;* when one *sees through* the sense of illusion *(maya).* At this level of attainment one is free to move on physical, astral and causal levels and is under no sense of delusion at all. Such a person is a *perfected being.* This is the level of attainment reached by most of the masters to whom I refer.

The next step is that of becoming *supremely free;* with a sense of individualization but with full knowledge of *being* Spirit. As the wave is to the ocean, so the soul is to

Spirit, and here the soul knows its *wave* nature and its *ocean* nature.

No definite pattern is followed by all souls on the path. Some move from this world to the astral realms after leaving the body and never return to the physical plane again. They continue through layers of astral and mental realms to full realization. Some who attain salvation decide to return to this plane for experience or for the purpose of assisting others on the path. Such people usually assist the masters in their work here. Many disciples of a master are preparing themselves, through selfless service to others, to take the next step in their unfoldment; that of mastership.

Masters may function in public and have a spiritual ministry or they may remain in the background and work with the few who are drawn to them for advanced work. Some masters play other roles; as scientists, writers, educators, politicians and business executives. In this way they infuse mass consciousness with their realization and bring forth new and necessary projects, discoveries and reforms. Not all masters play the role of minister or prophet. There are a number of highly Self-realized souls who are active in the world but whose spiritual stature is not generally recognized.

There may be thousands of fully enlightened men and women on the planet and I cannot accept the contention, popular in some quarters, that the world has five, ten, fifty (pick a number) or more masters, only. This is just being *too* specific and cannot be so. And information which is purported to be *precise,* concerning certain masters and their place in the spiritual hierarchy (along with their duties and responsibilities) must be written off as nonsense.

Different views are set forth concerning the definition of *avatara.* This Sanskrit word is used to signify the *descent of Divinity into the flesh.* Some say that an *avatar* is one who has never known delusion, has always been a "Son of God"; a liberated soul. Avatars

come into the manifest realms — causal, astral and physical, depending upon where they are needed—to act as saviors and to show the way to spiritual freedom to souls who are yet in darkness. Another view is that any person who attains the final release and becomes supremely free, upon returning to earth, is an avatar. Of course this is speculation and does not really serve a useful purpose.

There are many avatars on the planet now but seldom do they announce the matter. Most of them do remain in seclusion and work with masters, who tend to be more in the public eye, as well as work to clear mass consciousness and uplift the human race as a whole. Occasionally an avatar will let it be known that he has come for the good of mankind. Not all self-proclaimed *God-men* are truly what they claim to be, even when they have sold themselves on the idea.

Sometimes the situation becomes a bit precarious to examine; as when an obviously advanced person with charm, occult ability and the power to change lives for the better claims to be an avatar and the *evidence* cannot be substantiated. When more than one person, living at the same time, makes identical claims it is surely cause for wonder. Many Indian gurus have claimed to be the reincarnation of Rama, Krishna or other known saints. I am told that today, in India, there are at least six men who claim to be the reincarnation of a certain sage who left this plane fifty years ago. It would be an interesting psychological experiment to bring these gentlemen together and encourage an honest discussion. Are five of the above-mentioned six men telling a falsehood? Perhaps. Then again, perhaps not. It may be that even a highly realized soul can have a touch of delusion in his consciousness and may be inwardly *identifying* with the sage in question. Or, perhaps it is all part of the Divine drama — the hopeful result being that we will not look too closely into the lives of illumined men — but will look within ourselves for truth.

Another view is this: When a person reaches the level of awareness where he knows there is only one *Life, Presence and Power* perhaps it is his natural tendency to also accept the truth that the *One* has played all roles in the past as *It* is playing all present roles.

Also, we have the concept of the *universal avatar;* Spirit as every man — awake in varying degrees. In truth, there is no difference between the average unawakened man or woman and a supremely free person except in degrees of conscious realization. When all men are awake in Spirit then the *mortal dream* will be over. The second coming of Jesus is a fanciful hope. The awakening of individuals to the realization of their own *Christ-nature* is what will liberate man and transform society. The hope of an eventual arrival of a major prophet on the world scene may buttress our faith and calm our anxieties but the more important task is for us to work steadily to clear our own consciousness and become Self-realized.

Enlightened people declare, in words and deeds, "I am the way, the truth and the life." That is, an embodiment of the Divine sets the example and restates never-changing truths in the language of his time and in keeping with the symbols and traditions of his culture. Some masters stress devotion; others stress meditation, selfless service or proper use of intelligence. Each offers what he feels he must and each serves, for students must be met at their level of understanding and taught according to their temperament and capacity.

No real and lasting good results from teaching esoteric truths to the masses for they cannot *hear.* The masses need general instructions having to do with conduct and preparation for their eventual entry into the true spiritual life. Well do I recall the occasions when I have given forth basic and helpful facts — only to be told afterwards, by some: "What you say is very interesting and a good theory but have you heard about the philosophy of

. . . .?" Jesus said, "Everyone who is of truth heareth my voice."

All spiritual teachers have experienced this communication problem. A teacher may be God-realized, literate, and patient in his exposition of the teaching; and there will be some who just cannot seem to understand. Yoganandaji used to say to the disciples, "I like it when you understand what I say and put my advice into practice, but I am even more happy when you understand without my having to talk and when you are so in tune that you naturally do the right things."

It is commonly accepted that some avatars remain in the flesh for hundreds of years, working with the slow evolutionary progress of man on the planet. Of course, there is no proof to satisfy the mind that I know of, except for the assertion of enlightened sages who claim to know what they are talking about. Such great souls are sometimes accessible to certain disciples, either in a physical confrontation or through spiritual vision. One such avatar is Babaji, who is said to reside in the vicinity of Badrinarayan in the Himalayas. The term *Babaji* simply means *Revered Father.* Babaji is known by other names, also. There is no information available regarding his place of birth, his background or his day to day activities. He does have a sister, *Mataji* (Revered Mother) who is also spiritually advanced and who is engaged in work of a similar nature. Babji has said that he gave yogic initiation to Swami Shankara in the sixth century A.D.

Yoganandaji met Babaji at least once. As a young man just about to leave his native land to come to America he prayed for guidance and assurance concerning the decision he had made. After a long time at prayer there was a knock on the door and Babaji came in and shared with Master his thoughts relative to the need of this message being offered to peoples of the western world. Sri Yukteswar met with Babaji on more than one occasion

and it was at the latter's request that Sri Yukteswar wrote *The Holy Science,* a slim volume explaining the underlying unity of world religious thought. Lahiri Mahasaya, being a direct disciple of Babaji, of course was on intimate terms with his guru.

There are others who have also seen the great master and who can testify to his concern for the spiritual welfare of all men. But, the nature of Babaji's consciousness and the character of his physical form is such that he cannot always be seen by the physical eye. *Third eye* vision or clairvoyant ability seems to be necessary in many instances. Which leads to the question, "Is Babaji (and are other fully illumined masters) physically embodied or not?" Perhaps it depends upon what we mean by the term *physical.* Specifically speaking, mental and astral substances are physical; that is, they are of the nature of the manifest world, even though seldom discernable to the average person who is limited to using only his ordinary senses.

Swami Muktananda, along with others whose opinions I respect, believes that Babaji and others of his level of attainment are not really of *this world* as we commonly understand people to be. Rather, such souls dwell, in consciousness, in the *world of Reality,* beyond *maya,* but they can, at will, come into the range of vision of one who is attuned through devotion and whose mental waves are stilled. Also, such souls can be *seen* at the third eye center. One who is adept at deep meditation can *see* at a distance on this plane and also *see* into other dimensions. For instance, Lahiri Mahasaya often told disciples, "Why come to view my flesh and bones when I am always within range of your spiritual sight?" Of course, even when we know a person to be illumined we, at times, like to see the "flesh and bones" as this is evidence that we, too, can attain the spiritual heights while in the envelope of flesh.

Masters, such as Babaji, form the body and hold it in form by an act of will and they can release their

hold at one point in space and *appear* instantly at another point in space. Also, even if such a body is of finer material than the ones we are accustomed to viewing, a true master can stay within the aura of the planet, acting as a seat of power and realization, in order to enliven mass consciousness. So it is obvious that they would reside in a general area of the planet. Illumined masters of Babaji's spiritual stature remain in various parts of the world and silently send forth their blessings. Surely, such souls are even now working in India, China, Russia, Europe, Africa, South America and in the United States. Little does the average man know of the real work that is ceaselessly going on, on more subtle levels, for the regeneration of the world.

There are many spiritual men in India who are known by the common name *Babaji,* for this is a much used title of respect given to those who are recognized to be God-conscious. There are some stories in current circulation, concerning the *Babaji* to whom I refer, which are difficult to accept as being valid. I have been told of a man, in India, who was being driven homeward in a cab. As he passed a crowded market place he saw a young *holy man* walking along with his eyes closed; his feet about six inches off the ground! Truly a sight worthy of stopping the cab and examining more closely. But, no — our subject continued on his way. Upon arriving home the man browsed through a copy of Yoganandaji's *Autobiography,* saw the picture of Babaji (an artist's conception) and *recognized* that the man he had seen performing such a strange feat to be none other than the great master himself! Such a tale is difficult to accept.

Babaji is reported to be of youthful appearance and to have with him a small group of advanced disciples. He works with some masters who have an outer mission and maintains telepathic communion with them and with certain influential people who, in turn, function in varying segments of society. A fact which is difficult for

some people to understand is that an avatar, though he works *through* a body, is not confined to it. The body is merely a point of contact with this plane. Some idea of Babaji's state of consciousness may be gotten from the words of Lahiri Mahasaya, (when Lahiri *appeared* before one of his disciples, Swami Keshabananda, after his (Lahiri's) transition): "I do not leave this earth entirely. Henceforth I shall spend some time with Babaji in the Himalayas and with *Babaji in the cosmos.*"

Master said, prior to his passing, that he would spend some time *in space* and then return to this plane to be with Babaji for a time. Some masters, after an outer mission, spend the following incarnation *at rest*, away from organizational efforts. Sometimes they remain on more subtle astral or mental planes during the in-between times of physical expression. Master also told many of us that we would be with Babaji after our current earth-mission.

Babaji's best known (to the public) disciple, of this present age, is Lahiri Mahasaya. Lahiri was born September 30, 1828 near Krishnager, Bengal. His full name was Shyama Charan Lahiri but he later became known, to his disciples and others, as Lahiri Mahasaya. *Mahasaya* is translated as "large minded." He married in 1846 and, over the years, he and his wife became the parents of four children, two sons and two daughters. Lahiri was employed as an accountant in the Military Engineering Department of the government and in 1861, when he was thirty-three years of age, he met his guru.

At Ranikhet, at the foot of Nanda Devi, one of the highest peaks in the Himalayas, Babaji *awakened* Lahiri and initiated him into the science of *Kriya Yoga.* After a week and a half in the avatar's company Lahiri was sent back to his responsibilities and told that he was to set an example for the modern world; that *it is possible* for one to live a well-ordered life in society and still be anchored in God. Babaji also lifted the Dark-Age secrecy

which had kept *Kriya Yoga,* and other methods, from the unaware masses. He told Lahiri, "Give *Kriya* freely to all who humbly ask for help."

Lahiri initiated over five thousand people into the art and practice of meditation during his lifetime. Until retirement he worked during the day and met with his disciples during evening and late-night hours. He slept very little as his constant superconscious condition afforded not only relaxation but an inflow of vital force so that he did not need to take refuge in sleep.

The master's exit for the body was in accordance with yogic tradition. When his time came Lahiri discussed certain scriptures of the *Bhagavad-Gita* with his disciples and then said, "I am going home." Be comforted — I shall rise again." Turning his body around three times, in accordance with Vedic rites, he assumed a lotus posture, faced north and *drew his forces up.* In this manner he entered the *Great Oneness.*

Among Lahiri's disciples the one selected by Babaji to train Yoganandaji for his mission to the west was Swami Sri Yukteswar. Yukteswarji's given name was Priya Nath Kara. Born of well to do parents in Serampore, India on May 10, 1855 his formal schooling was, by his own admission: " . . . . little; I found it slow and shallow." Sri Yukteswarji's early adult years were spent managing properties inherited from his father and being a husband and father. He and his wife had one daughter.

In his twenty-seventh year Sri Yukteswarji met his guru, Lahiri Mahasaya and was initiated into *Kriya Yoga.* Not until the death of his wife did Sri Yukteswarji accept initiation into the Swami Order and take the name by which he is presently known. *Yukteswar* means "united to God." *Sri* is a prefix of respect, used by those who revere a spiritual leader.

Yoganandaji told me that his guru did not have a large following. Disciples came for training and they often left when they could not measure up to Sri Yukteswarji's

standards. To such disciples the guru would say, "Go your way if you like. But, if you stay I think you will come to see that my way is better."

Sri Yukteswarji lived quietly, dividing his time between his two hermitages; one in Calcutta and the other at Puri, on the Bay of Bengal. This great guru was also a noted astrologer and pointed out in his writings that the world is currently passing into an ascending *Electrical time-cycle* and is not working through *Kali Yuga,* the Dark Age, as is unfortunately today being taught by the majority of yoga teachers. Our current *time-cycle,* 2400 years in duration, was correctly described centuries ago as the time when man would begin his successful exploration of outer space and learn *to travel from one planet to another and even to other solar systems.**

When a master comes to this plane for the purpose of awakening souls he is usually joined by disciples who incarnate at nearly the same time as the master. Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa once told some disciples that he remembered, while in meditation, that before he left the light realms to take on a flesh body he knew he would require helpers. Coming across a meditating sage he aroused him from his contemplation and asked him to follow him (Ramakrishna) to earth to assist in the fulfillment of his mission. The sage agreed. Years later when one of Ramakrishna's disciples brought a friend from high school to visit the saint, Ramakrishna *recognized* the young man to be none other than that meditating sage. Thus, the one who became known to the world as Swami Vivekananda was to begin his mission. The swami came to America during the last decade of the last century and was the inspiration for the founding of many Vedanta Centers in key U. S. cities.

---

*See the author's THE WAY OF THE INITIATE for full details concerning the ELECTRIC TIME-CYCLES as revealed by Sri Yukteswar. Available from CSA Press.

In 1920, after ten years of training under his guru Paramahansa Yogananda came to this country. For the first sixteen years he was known as Swami Yogananda, as the higher title of Paramahansa was not bestowed until he returned to India in 1936. Before leaving India Yoganandaji had a vision in which he saw a multitude of faces and he knew these were the faces of disciples who awaited him in the new world. Over the years he met these people and shortly before his own passing a disciple asked him if he had met all whom he had seen in the vision. Master replied, "Only a few more to go."

A master fulfills his purpose on this plane without any karmic compulsion. He does not *have to do anything* — but he works for the good of others because it is his nature to do it. The following words are attributed to the Buddha: "Know that from time to time a free soul is born into the world a fully enlightened one, blessed and worthy, abounding in wisdom and goodness, happy with the knowledge of the worlds, unsurpassed as a guide to erring mortals, a teacher of gods and men. He proclaims the truth both in its letter and in its spirit, lovely in its origin, lovely in its progress, lovely in its consummation. A higher life doth he make known in all its purity and all its perfectness."

Jesus, whom much of the western world reveres as a *Son of God,* is another whose work it was to *save* souls. From the absolute point of view souls are not in need of being saved, for they are individualizations of Spirit. But, souls which are identified with nature to the extent of having forgotten their true condition can be reminded of the *truth* by a master teacher. Jesus never expected a world-shaking transformation which would result in the establishing of the kingdom of heaven on earth during his ministry. He must have known, as all masters do, that it takes time to awaken the millions of sleeping souls who yet wander in darkness. He lived in the consciousness of another dimension: "My kingdom is not of this world!"

Heaven can be realized when we become aware of order, harmony and fulfillment and this realization is possible at any given moment in time. Even while we function on this plane we can become aware of heaven. This is the message of the masters.

Cutting through the myths and traditions which have, for centuries, obscured the occult message of Jesus, we find the same central theme to be in evidence; as taught by masters who preceded him in history as well as those who followed. After a master leaves the world his followers tend to embellish the incidents of his life and mission with colorful tales. Thus, so tradition has it, many masters were born as a result of supernatural intervention, were threatened by jealous political or religious leaders, performed miracles and, in due time, left the world in dramatic fashion. True stories are woven into a pattern along with fictional accounts in order to establish the master as a *special* person in order to build and sustain the faith of the followers.

Objective historians are convinced that the *New Testament* was never meant to be a historical document but, rather, a *manual of instruction* for the early Christians.* In the western world the true message of the *New Testament* has been largely misunderstood. Even the majority of occult teachers have failed to comprehend the essential doctrine and organizations, anxious to gain new members, often blend the sayings of Jesus into a contemporary presentation of ancient philosophies. All too often it seems that many are today more concerned with *believing* rather than *knowing.*

It is not surprising that some enlightened masters exhibit characteristics which, at first glance, may seem inconsistent with an illumined consciousness. Of course, often we judge too quickly. When an illumined soul

*See THE HIDDEN TEACHINGS OF JESUS REVEALED. The author's mystical explanation of the teachings of Jesus based on THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. JOHN. CSA Press

decides to take on a physical body he also agrees to identify, to a small degree, with *maya*. This identification results in partial delusion. Inwardly the master is always aware of the truth and knows he is but playing a role for a specific purpose. The physical body is subject to the laws of the physical universe, including the laws which govern inherited tendencies. Also, during the early years on the planet one is subjected to opinions and theories common to the cultural and social environment.

We may think of an enlightened person as being truly master over all relative conditions. On the other hand we may be confronted with evidence of a person's degree of Self-realization and, at the same time, some evidence of his *seeming* delusion. This need not shake our faith. Almost all enlightened souls, expressing as they do through mind and body, will be found to possess a few peculiarities. If they are enlightened they are conscious of expressing through a conditioned vehicle and consider the experience as a game-situation.

Most difficult of all for some disciples to accept is the matter of a spiritually awakened person going through a period of severe illness. We are often quick to exclaim, "Why do they not heal themselves?" Sometimes they do. At other times they let nature take its course and they watch the proceedings from an objective vantage point. Usually such illness comes late in life and the person involved does not want to initiate a new karmic cycle by *willing* the problem away or by *seeing the nothingness* of it. It is one of life's mysteries.

Writers have told such fascinating and astounding tales about various masters that the average student expects any enlightened person to be able to pull off a minor (or major) miracle at will and is chagrined when such a person merely shrugs and says, "Let things take their course." The difference is that the average person takes *suffering* to be real while an enlightened person knows it to be a dream-happening. Pleasure is also a

dream-happening. From the *absolute* point of view such appearances as sickness, health, pain, pleasure, riches, poverty, success, failure — all manifestations of *maya* — are of no consequence, as we label these appearances according to our training and for purposes of convenience. I will not argue against the idea that, while we are here, health, prosperity and happiness are to be desired. But, the major emphasis should be Self-realization.

One who has attained the level of soul-realization defined as *salvation* may yet have some karma to work out and therefore might experience occasional illness or have to confront human problems. One at the level of mastership, depending upon his attainment, (whether or not he has completely seen through *maya*) might have occasions of human difficulty. This would hold true for one who has seen through *maya* but who has agreed, for a time, to play the game on this level. A supremely free soul would not have any problems of any kind.

Not a day goes by but that I am inwardly aware of the living presence of the masters. Moving through *inner space,* mind and consciousness knows not any limitation so common in the world without; within, one can communicate instantly with another who may be thousands of miles distant or who may dwell, not on this plane at all, but upon more subtle levels where intuitive perception is needed by one intending to intrude.

While I have told things in this chapter which sheds some light on the true mission of the masters and avatars — what I have shared is but a hint of the real significance of their work. For the whole story one will have to awaken to that place in consciousness where the entire panorama, in all its majesty and glory, can be viewed and understood.

Chapter Five

WITH PARAMAHANSA YOGANANDA

After I met my guru several weeks passed before he formally accepted me for discipleship. During this probationary period I entered fully into the routine of study, meditation and work which was the pattern for all resident disciples at Mt. Washington. Whenever I had occasion to talk with Master he invariably said, "Be patient. Stay here and be one of us. I have plans for you." So, I stayed and waited — and wondered what his plans for me were.

Every morning the resident monks gathered on the tennis court below the main building for a thirty minute session of *recharging* exercises. Master had devised a simple program of light body movements, involving controlled breathing and conscious direction of energy in the body, many years before and taught these exercises to his students and disciples. We were instructed to practice the recharging exercises morning and evening as a means to keep the body vitalized as well as a method of learning conscious control over the vital forces.

After the morning exercise period we gathered in the main chapel for thirty minutes of meditation. Breakfast

followed and then — to work. Resident disciples were assigned tasks according to their ability as well as the need at hand. Some worked at the construction of new buildings; others were engaged in the print shop, helped to maintain the grounds or assisted in the office. I usually typed letters to students who were taking Master's lessons by mail: an activity which I enjoyed as it gave me a personal contact with people from all parts of the world who were seeking greater understanding.

There were well over one hundred disciples living at the California Centers and at least two thirds of this number were women. Since we lived by monastic rules men and women disciples did not mingle; we had separate quarters. Some women worked in the kitchen, preparing vegetarian meals for the residents; the majority were busy in various office procedures. Business letters had to be typed, lessons assembled and mailed and the accounting department maintained a record of all transactions. Considering that all involved are volunteer workers, practicing *karma yoga,* the organizational machinery runs quite smoothly to this day.

I imagine the pattern of Master's organization is pretty much the same today as it was when I was a part of it. Men, like myself, came to *work* for God and to *realize* God. I, for instance, received fifteen dollars a month for personal needs and it was more than adequate since room and board was furnished by the organization. We were, after all, there to serve. It was a privilege to be a part of such a useful work and to have the advantage of an ideal environment in which to study and meditate. Master was firm in his counsel that resident disciples should be well groomed, well mannered and, to all intents and purposes, normal. He often said, "My boys and girls (speaking of the disciples) are just like any other people but their hearts are different." He would not allow any outward show of monasticism such as special dress, shaven heads or unkempt beards among the men. Only

after Master left us did the members of the board agree to allow the women disciples to wear *saris* and to have both men and women disciples who had taken final vows to take a monastic name.

Toward the end of my probationary period I joined my brother monks in landscaping part of the extensive Lake Shrine in Pacific Palisades. Not all who are *dedicated* to karma yoga are able to surrender their ego. Under the direction of Reverend Stanley Nosak, who was in charge of this project, long back-breaking hours were spent in getting the grounds ready on schedule and not a few monks from Mt. Washington requested, in one way or another, permission to return to headquarters. To Stanley's credit I will say that he worked as hard, if not harder, than anyone else on the project. I also helped in the pouring of the cement for the foundation of India Center, a large attractive addition to the SRF Church in Hollywood.

In late afternoon, when the last cement truck was leaving the above-mentioned job, Reverend C. Bernard, a long-time disciple of Master's, came to inspect the work. Spotting me he came over and gave me a message, "Master wants to see you this evening after dinner."

At the appointed hour I was ready, freshly bathed, bone-weary from a good day's work and with all soul-channels open. I waited more than five hours and it was after midnight when I gave up hope and retired. Later I found out that Master had been called on an errand and had returned just a few minutes after I had given up my lonely vigil. But, no matter, the next day I was informed that I was to be available in the downstairs hall at the same time as was set for the evening before.

I was there on time. And another four hours were spent in waiting, meditating and listening to recordings of devotional music. Just when I felt that my wait would be in vain (though I was determined not to leave that spot) I heard the elevator mechanism. The door opened

and Master looked out. Seeing me standing there he exclaimed, "There's my boy!" Walking the few paces to where I stood he touched my forehead in a gesture of blessing and said quietly, "I'm glad to see you, Roy. Come with me."

A few yards down the hall Master stopped at Reverend Bernard's door and knocked, accentuating his arrival with: "Bernard — Bernard! Open the door?" Reverend Bernard's given name was Bernard Cole but we all referred to him as Bernard, which seemed to *fit* as names often do. When the door was opened we went inside. After a few introductory words, Master turned to me. My guru wore the same garb as he had the night we had first met; blue trousers, overcoat and hat — as he was planning to go for a short walk and take in the night air. "Give me your right hand," he asked, "and kneel down."

I knelt at his feet, our right hands clasped. With simplicity Master continued, "When I met my guru, years ago, he said, 'Will you always love me as I promise to love you, without any condition, regardless of what either of us ever does?' I ask you the same question now; will you always love me as I promise to love you, without any condition, regardless of what either of us ever does?" Words cannot describe that moment!

When I had uttered an affirmative response Master beckoned me to my feet and embraced me. Then I learned of his plans for me. "I want you to go to Phoenix. Will you go?" He knew I would but it was characteristic of my guru to ask rather than to order. A few more minutes were passed in polite conversation with Bernard and another disciple who was there. Then, Master said, "Bernard will drive you to the train station in the morning. Come with me now." We walked to the outside garden where he bade me goodbye for the time being.

Before dawn the following morning I was driven to the train station in Pasadena. Several hours later I

arrived in Phoenix just as darkness was falling. A short cab ride brought me to the Phoenix SRF Center, at that time just a couple of blocks from the state capitol.

Bernard's mother, Mrs. Cole, lived nearby and came to the local Center to cook occasional meals and keep the house in order. It was she who welcomed me and had a hot dinner in readiness. Before long Herbert Reed, the resident minister, came in and filled my mind and consciousness with the plans that were even then in motion to make the Phoenix Center self-supporting.

Yoganandaji's idea was for each branch Center to have a business enterprise attached. A dual purpose was to be served; disciples were to be provided a training ground and the income would support the local work. Herbert's *inspiration* was a goat dairy. He felt, not without reason, that the Valley of the Sun could well use such a service since so many people were coming there because of the healthful climate. But, it is one thing to have a useful idea and quite another to promote it.

Five acres had been negotiated for in nearby Scottsdale. The previous owner, a member of the Jehovah's Witness movement and a spiritually-inclined materialist had failed with the dairy with his, "I believe in a fast nickel over a slow dime" theory. But, the proposition looked good, just the same.

That first evening I was entirely won over by Herbert's enthusiastic recital of the merits of goat milk vs. cow milk; goat milk being high in trace minerals and non-mucus forming. Also, small children who cannot tolerate cow milk often thrive when goat milk is substituted. Our major objection proved to be the subconscious belief among the populus that goats are unclean; which is not true. Only the rutting buck is offensive; the nannys are gentle, clean and altogether adorable. The *kids* have to be seen to be believed for they are a true delight.

The year which followed was routine once the pattern was established. I meditated before dawn, extracted the

mammary offerings of forty goats and then pasteurized and bottled it. Some of the milk we delivered to nearby homes. Phoenix residents who desired unpasteurized milk came to the dairy. The surplus was made into cheese and sold to various Italian resturants in the area. Chores included the irrigation of pasture land, general care and feeding of the animals and the building of three adobe brick barns. Adobe bricks were made by the Indians; mud mixed with straw is simply poured into forms on the ground and left to dry. The results are bricks weighing several pounds each which can then be laid with mud for mortar.

At day's end I would shower and seek out a quiet place for a prolonged meditation session. Inner contemplation became easier as I practiced regularly and, gradually, the inner world became as real, if not more so, as the outer. It has been my experience that if one will but take the *time* to meditate it will not be long before the currents of thought move naturally back to the *Source*.

I must also confess to over-zealousness during these first months of intensive self-discipline. I experimented with fasting, going without sleep for two or three days and inward chanting during the working hours. During a brief period of time I even made a bed of rocks, with canvas covering, so I would not be tempted to sleep long hours and deprive myself of valuable meditation time. This latter practice was not and, is not, recommended; it was my own short-lived idea.

Before long I became more moderate and left off the extreme practices, being reminded of Krishna's words as recorded in the *Bhagavad-Gita:* "The path which leads to self-realization is not for the person who overeats or, on the other hand, fasts too much. It is not for the person who sleeps too much or sleeps hardly at all (as an act of penance). For the person who is temperate in taking food and in his recreational pursuits, who is controlled in

his actions, whose habits are regulated, a natural disciple results which destroys all sorrow." I was not returned to the path of balance through any great or dramatic revelation; one morning while attending to chores, vividly aware of my over-worn condition, the above verse just came into my mind and seemed to make very good sense.

No formal training was provided for monks at that time; we learned by doing, by reading Master's books and through his personal counsel whenever we had occasion to see him.

Master's suggestion to new disciples was to read only his books and lessons for the first year, practice the principles and become grounded in meditation. A few other books were recommended later; *The Practice of the Presence of God* by Brother Lawrence, *The Imitation of Christ* by Thomas A. Kempis and *The Saints That Moved the World.* The latter title contained stories of various Catholic saints; St. Anthony, St. Francis, St. Theresa and others. All of the books mentioned here inspired me to take the monastic life seriously.

Right after my acceptance into the work by Yoganandaji he had gone, with a few disciples, to live at his retreat in the Mohave Desert near Twenty-Nine Palms, California. Here, with only occasional returns to the coast, he remained until shortly before his passing to write his commentaries on *Genesis, The New Testament* and *The Bhagavad-Gita.* As of this writing none of the above literary works have yet appeared in book form but one day, surely, they shall!

It was a welcome privilege to be invited by Master to visit him at his retreat. Separate houses near his residence were provided for men and women disciples. When I visited him, usually for periods of a few days to a week, I assisted some of the monks in keeping the grounds clean and in making general repairs. Often, during lunch on the patio just outside of Master's house, he would open the window and talk with us for a while. Often he sent out special treats; mangos or specially prepared

desserts. Early evening, at dusk, we would sometimes be invited to walk with Master when he came out to take a break from his long hours working over manuscripts.

These evening walks were always fun and always informal. Master would tell of his experiences, reflect on the ever-presence of God, tell of the nature of *maya,* express his hopes for the future growth of the work and, invariably, discern a disciple's innermost needs and offer a practical bit of advice.

I recall one evening as though it were only yesterday. It was late and the desert air was cold. Several of the monks were getting ready to drive the few miles to their quarters and a few of the close disciples who had been with Master a long time, were present. Just before saying good night, Master turned on a flashlight and directed the beam into my face. "When you came several months ago I asked some of these people if I should keep you." My guru's voice was confidential but it was clear that he spoke to all of us.

In the darkness, as Master paused, I could hear the restless movement of the others. For the last few years before he passed he often asked those who would be left with the responsibility of the organization for their advice; it was his way of preparing them to make decisions even though he invariably had the final word on important matters.

The flashlight beam never wavered. After a few moments Master continued; "And, do you know what they said? They said, 'Send him away. He's been sick and maybe he'll get sick again.' But I told them, No, I have looked into his heart and he stays. And, now see how well and strong and God-loving you are becoming!"

There was another pause, then the light was turned off and Master's voice floated on the night air, "Good night, boys. I'll see you in the morning." With that he left to begin his evening walk and the rest of us were silent.

During one of my last visits to the desert retreat I was taken to Master's living room. He was radiant and in a talkative mood. "I've just completed the *Gita*. Now my writing is finished. A little while ago, when I had finished looking over the last page I relaxed here for a while with my eyes closed. I saw an orange ball of light and, opening my eyes, I still saw it. As I looked into it, Sri Yukteswar, Lahiri and Babaji appeared and smiled their blessings."

The months passed swiftly. Two more monks came from California to help with the ever-increasing work at the dairy. One was Leo Cocks, now of Pacifica, California. Leo's parents were active in the Rosicrucian Order in San Jose during his boyhood and, later, when he began his own investigations into the meaning of life, he was drawn to the Vedanta Temple in San Francisco. It was not long until he met Master and came into the work.

We worked long hours, meditated and in every way fulfilled our roles as monks of the Order. But, the dairy was not a financial success and, after little more than a year the goats were sold, the property disposed of and new duties assigned. Leo returned to California while I moved into Phoenix to assist Herbert as assistant to the minister of SRF Church.

In Phoenix I had more time for meditation. Work hours saw me answering correspondence, painting the interior of the building and taking care of the extensive lawns. After a while I was informed by Master that I should begin to teach from his lessons at the regularly scheduled Sunday evening class. This I did and it was my first attempt at working with truth students. We discussed the lesson for the evening and meditated.

There were no unusual happenings those next few months as my routine was pretty much the same from day to day. In the fall, when Herbert was asked to visit Los Angeles on organization business, I was left to give one or two Sunday morning talks; a confidence-shattering

experience despite my devotion. I had no instruction before then in sermon preparation or, delivery. Herbert called on a Saturday afternoon and said, "Master wants me to stay over a few days and he wants you to take the service there tomorrow morning." I don't recall what I talked about but I do know that I read from the *New Testament, the Gita* and Master's *Whispers from Eternity* (a book of poems and prayers), led the congregation in chanting and then meditated with them for a long, long time! A note here to group leaders and new ministers: when short on words, meditate. Most people won't mind and the service will probably be the better for it.

Later, Master was to give me practical advice on the matter of sermon preparation. He said: "Plan your talk and make a brief outline. Know where you are going to start and where you are going to finish and what points you want to make. If you can include one or two humorous stories, so much the better. Then, tear up your outline, meditate and speak from the heart." I found it to be useful advice which I follow to this day.

Strange moods sometimes beset a person who is seriously striving on the spiritual path. Having come into the work at an early age I had no great *past* to overcome as far as this present incarnation is concerned. And since monks had no outside interest; we didn't read the papers or listen to the radio except on occasion, had no social life, did not go to movies or have casual get-together sessions with friends. Even monks who worked together were counseled not to fraternize except for times of work. All time was used for study, meditation, introspective thought and *karma yoga.* But, from time to time, I became despondent when I thought of my seeming lack of spiritual progress.

During one of these periods Leo and I visited Master at the Hermitage in Encinitas. It was late when we arrived and Master welcomed us in the main hall of the building. After we had talked for a while he sent Leo on an errand.

Then, he motioned me to sit beside him on the couch. Putting his arm around my shoulders he asked, "What's the matter?" I didn't know what the "matter" was; I was just discouraged. So I cried. Minutes went by with Master saying nothing, holding me close to his breast with his arms around me. Finally I felt better and smiled, more than a little embarrassed — but comforted, too.

Just then Leo came back. Master gave me a hug and asked, "Better now?" I was and he knew it. Blessing us both he asked one of the sisters to drive us to the San Diego bus station so we could take the return journey to Phoenix.

Later that night I reflected on the blessing of a true guru. One who could be, as needed, an ideal example, wise counselor, strict disciplinarian and, when necessary, a warm and understanding spiritual father.

In the fall of 1951 Herbert and I were asked to Mt. Washington headquarters to attend a special function, which our brother and sister disciples would also attend. Master selected Thanksgiving and Christmas as occasions to be with his disciples. It was always a festive time of fellowship, meditation and, invariably, a banquet. For these special gatherings Master was sure to spend a little time in the kitchen preparing Indian dishes and supervising the general preparations.

An excellent cook, Master delighted in serving guests food prepared by his own hands. No visitor went away from an interview with him without a handful, or a basketfull, of fruit or delicacies. One item which often showed up was *mango chutney:* cooked mangos and spices *preserved* in half-pint jars. Which reminds me of a story.

Abbey George, who has for years been a barber in Hollywood, is a devoted disciple and once conspired to surprise his guru. When plans were set, Master's secretaries saw to it that he was taken on an errand, away from Mt. Washington. When he returned some time later

and decided to go to the bathroom, "Lo and behold!" the bathtub was full of mangos! Abbey's brother, *George George* of Miami, Florida had arranged to have several bushels of mangos shipped to Los Angeles. *Mission Mango* was a success and several disciples worked into the wee small hours peeling the fruit as Master presided over the cooking pots!

Another story comes to mind relative to Master's culinary habits. A disciple, James Coller, wanted to see his guru when he desired some answers to pressing questions relating to his own spiritual condition. He had always seen Master in the role of teacher and guru, usually with other people about. This time he went to the Hermitage he was told to go directly to the kitchen. There, dressed in bathrobe and slippers, with a large wooden spoon in one hand and a pan of some special vegetable curry in the other, was Master. That day spiritual advice accompanied varied remarks concerning the fine art of food preparation.

All of us who were fortunate to know Yoganandaji value these intimate moments when we were able to share a portion of his non-public life. Master enjoyed nature, the creative results of others, stimulating conversation, and all of the *simple* and natural things. But even while in a relaxed and carefree mood, one was ever aware of his inner nature and of his deep realization of God. Somehow, regardless of how casual an occasion might seem to be, my guru always turned our attention to important things and reminded us of the necessity of keeping the spiritual goal foremost in our thoughts.

Before Herbert and I left Mt. Washington an unexpected happening took place. On the last day, just after dark, Master returned from a drive and talked for a while with a number of disciples; we seemed to *materialize* out of nowhere when he was available. After a while Master blessed the group and asked Herbert and me to accompany him to his private quarters on the upper

floor of the building. Once there, Master discussed with us certain matters concerning the Phoenix church. This church was important to my guru, as all of them were, and he frequently talked about the future growth of the Phoenix church in particular. It has been only in these past years, as I have been toiling to spread the word, that I have more fully realized the truly awesome work that Master undertook in his efforts to spread the message, extend the organizational influence and see to the needs of the disciples. And, the disciples always came first.

Then, as spontaneously as he had asked a little over a year and a half before (when he accepted me as a disciple), Master said, "Kneel down beside my chair." I knelt, not knowing what to expect. Placing his hand on my head he spoke, in tones ringing of authority: *"I ordain you as a minister of Self-Realization and empower you to teach as I have taught. Teach others the way to God. Work as I have worked. Heal those who ask, initiate them into Kriya Yoga and stand as an example and a respresentative of God and the Great Gurus."*

I was moved, surprised and elevated in consciousness all at the same time. At that moment I was welcomed into the *brotherhood* and charged with the mission of sharing the way to soul liberation. I was not yet twenty-one years of age but it was the culmination of a dream!

Herbert asked, "Sir, do you mean we should heal and initiate others into Kriya Yoga?"

I will never forget Master's words: *"Yes! The same God is in you as is in me! Why shouldn't you do as I have done?"* Then, in a softer tone, *"My time is short. God needs willing workers who will bring others into His kingdom."*

With that our guru blessed us and bade us "safe journey." Although Master ordained me, as I have described, in the fall of the year I did not receive my certificate until March 9, 1952, on my twenty-first birthday.

As I write these words I am reminded of a yogic teaching: "The spoken or written word of a Self-realized soul is charged with a subtle power which is capable of transmitting his consciousness and realization to all who are intuitively receptive." In every instance when I have talked with a person who was Self-realized, his words have remained etched in my mind; and this is especially true of Master's utterances to me.

In Phoenix I took a more active part in church affairs; conducting classes, counseling and giving the occasional morning sermon. My meditations were more fruitful and the hours of work and sleep were, for the most part, dominated by a sense of a *presence.*

One early evening as I meditated, with letters yet to be answered, I was drawn into a vision; I stood with my brothers and sisters of the Order in a room crowded with people strange to me. At the far end of the room I saw a casket and my impression was: "That's Master — and this is his funeral service!"

So shaken was I that I immediately went to the next room and telephoned Los Angeles. One of the sisters informed me that Master was well and was at that very moment in Encinitas. I was relieved and believed my vision to be but a flight of fancy. Master had told us that he was not "long for this world" so the thought was with me.

The next evening Master called and asked Herbert and me to come to Encinitas. "Sister has passed," he said. "I want you to be here."

Sister Gyanamata (her name means "mother of wisdom") was a disciple who was highly respected. Many years before, she had met Yoganandaji in Seattle, Washington. After a time she became a permanent resident disciple and Master had given her the name of Gyanamata. Her life was one of devotion and utmost attunement. Yoganandaji used to say to her, "I need you for inspiration." Then, to others, in later years, he said, "I will not outlive Sister for very long."

When I stood at the back of the room during the funeral service, which Master conducted at the Hermitage, I saw my *vision* complete in all details, except that it was not Master's body in the casket. In my restless state I had not known enough to *look* more closely to get at the real facts which are sometimes revealed through a precognitive vision.

From that moment onward we all knew that it was but a matter of time until Master left us. Over the previous two or three years he openly discussed his plans and his "appointment with destiny." More and more he tried to make us self-reliant and embued us with conviction and dedication. Just a few months before, Master told an assembled group of disciples of an experience: He had been meditating, it seems, and found himself in space, rejoicing in freedom.

However, a secretary checked and found his body inert, with only minimal signs of life. Mr. Lynn was summoned from another part of the building and, after a moment's reflection, asked to be alone with Master. Yoganandaji explained what happened. Mr. Lynn entered into a meditative state. Contacting Master mentally he requested him to return to body awareness; which Master did. Recalling the episode Master chuckled and confided, "It was so wonderful to be free. I was not going to come back. But, Mr. Lynn asked me to and so I did. Next time, however, I'll make sure Mr. Lynn isn't around."

At the Christmas banquet, in 1951, Yoganandaji told us: "After I leave this world and rest awhile I will return. And, I will check up on you and the organization. I will be around but you won't recognize me."

My final visit with my guru was less than three weeks before his *mahasamadhi.* In February I requested permission to see him at his retreat and, upon arrival, found him in a happy mood. We talked of many things. He was expecting dinner guests so I did not want to press for too much time but, he did not seem to be in any hurry to let me go. During our conversation he

repeated, twice, the events leading up to the passing of Sri Yukteswar many years before and of his own feelings then. "The soul is like a caged bird," he told me. "even when the door is open and it knows it is free to go it is sometimes reluctant to do so because it has grown used to it's cage." He looked into my eyes with a peculiar searching gaze as he talked of soul liberation and of how one leaves this plane once his work is finished.

A few days before, when visiting Mt. Washington, I noticed that some of the younger monks seemed to be spending too much time in purposeless conversation. That had been my observation but my judgment may not have been a valid one. I did not mention this matter to Master but it must have been in my thoughts. During our talk my guru said, "Don't bother yourself with what others do or don't do. The important thing is for you to remain steady on the path and do what you must to attain God-realization!"

"My guru, Sri Yukteswar, use to say," Master continued, " 'The boat which carries souls across the river of delusion is ready to depart. Who will go? Who will go? if no one goes, I will go!' "

Less than three weeks later, while working late one evening in the church office in Phoenix, Herbert telephoned from Los Angeles. "Master left his body tonight. I'll tell you more about it when I see you."

The news was not unexpected, of course, but it was difficult to confront. Informing local members of Master's *mahasamadhi* I arranged to conduct a memorial service in the chapel two days later. Following the service I left immediately for California.

Yoganandaji had sometimes remarked, "I only want to be an echo of my guru." Sri Yukteswar left this plane March 9, 1936. Sixteen years later my guru also left, on March 7, 1952. There was nothing morbid about Yoganandaji's plans for departing for he was awake in God and at home on all planes of consciousness.

We who knew the inner side of his life were aware of inward planning and knowledge on his part.

I recall one evening at Mt. Washington when Master had just returned from a late errand. One of the younger monks had been having a mild disagreement with one of his senior brothers and, when Master arrived, proceeded to tell him about it. Master cut him short with a few kind words and said, "You should not bother me with trivial matters. These days I have more work to do on the inner planes than I do here."

Concerning personal desire Master said, "Through suffering the consequences of wrong desires man learns to choose right desires. Where there is no desire there is no activity and to be lazy is to be forsaken by God and man! The spiritual man works much harder than the worldly man, but what a great privilege it is to work for God! Remember that renunciation of egotistical desires is the way to happiness."

Master visited Encinitas for the last time on January 10, 1952. On the following day he had dinner with a number of close disciples and talked with many others. Then he returned to his desert retreat and spent much time in meditation, becoming more and more reclusive. He slept very little and often did not eat. Late in February he had occasion to remark, "I have a very important engagement in March." When disciples thought he referred to his planned talks with India's Ambassador and, others, and mentioned the dates Master said, "No, that is not the engagement to which I refer, though this is important, too."

On the 5th of March, late one evening, a telephone call came in from J. Oliver Black of Detroit, Michigan. Master said, "I had better talk with him. I may not have another chance." The next day he had breakfast with officials of the Indian government and then drove to the Lake Shrine in Pacific Palisades. There he made suggestions for improving the property and chanted for a long time in the chapel, sitting before the organ, surrounded

by disciples. Upon arriving at headquarters that evening he talked at length with disciples who gathered to greet him. "Don't intellectualize and rationalize," he counseled. "and never doubt that God will come to you. When duties are done, give your time to meditation and to experiencing inwardly the Divine Power."

On the final day my guru spent most of his time in deep meditation. Before leaving headquarters for the drive to the Biltmore Hotel in downtown Los Angeles he was asked, "Will you return tonight?" He responded, "No, I will not be coming back tonight." When he was settled in the suite at the hotel, in order to rest before the evening banquet, a disciple asked if he planned to spend the night there. He replied, "I won't be staying here tonight."

While being driven to the hotel he said, "Imagine, I have a room at the Biltmore! I am going back to where it all started." He was referring to 1925 when he lived at the hotel during his highly successful series of meetings at the nearby Philharmonic Auditorium. At that time, while standing at this window, looking down upon the thousands of people who were coming to the meetings, he said, "Babaji told me it would be like this."

One of many guests who had been invited to a banquet in honor of Benay R. Sen, Ambassador of India, Master was served a light vegetarian meal but ate very little. He was apparently in good health and showed no signs of being tired; but he was quiet and indrawn. When his turn came to speak he walked slowly to the microphone and talked movingly of a few personal experiences during his early years in the United States and of the importance of brotherhood and cooperation between all people. Then, concluding his talk by reciting a poem of his own composition, "My India," he turned to the right, lifted his eyes and left the body.

My mental and spiritual contact with Yoganandaji was such that I could not believe that his leaving his fleshly form would, in any way, mar our relationship.

It hasn't, of course, but for a long time I sorely missed his physical presence. The funeral service was conducted on March 11, in the chapel. A brother disciple, Swami Premananda of Washington, D. C. performed ancient Vedic rites to symbolically release the soul from earth ties. Dr. M. W. Lewis read appropriate selections from the *New Testament* and the *Bhagavad-Gita.* Mr. Lynn spoke briefly of the deathless guru-disciple relationship and Mr. Benay R. Sen delivered a moving eulogy.

To conclude the service we disciples walked by the casket for a final look at that form through which Spirit had found such a free and beautiful expression. We softly chanted, "Aum, Guru" as we paid our last respects and placed a flower offering before the altar. The lid was then placed on the massive bronze casket and the body was taken to Forest Lawn Memorial Park, where it rests to this day.

It was during those final moments that the impact of my guru's passing really hit me and my emotions came to the surface. Slipping away from the gathering I sought a secluded place in the garden in which to be alone and come to terms with my thoughts and feelings. After a while I settled down to quiet meditation.

The August 4, 1952 issue of Time magazine carried a photograph of Master in the Religion section and, in the article, informed it's millions of readers of the news from Forest Lawn that my guru's body, after twenty days, had not shown any signs of disintegration. This phenomenon has been so widely published that I will not dwell at length on the matter here. Two officials of Master's Indian organization had planned to come to the United States to view the body so the casket had not been sealed, although the glass lid was in place.

Mortuary officials, according to a notarized letter from the Director, Harry T. Rowe, observed the body, day after day, and could not detect any of the usual evidence of physical change. Finally, the bronze lid was sealed onto the casket and the body placed in a crypt. Yogis

claim that the physical form is purified as a result of the practice of pranayama and as a result of powerful energies circulating through the nervous system of a highly realized person.

Six months before leaving his body Master publicly named Mr. Lynn as his personal choice to lead the organization. On that occasion, following a *Kriya Yoga* service which was attended by hundreds of devotees, our guru conferred on Mr. Lynn the monastic title of *Rajasi Janakananda.* The title was most fitting as Mr. Lynn was both a business success and a spiritual success. *Rajasi* refers to "cosmic power" and is sometimes used to mean "king of the saints." *Janakananda* means "the bliss of Janak." Janak was a great king of India who was also a Self-realized man.

Born May 5, 1892 Mr. Lynn had an amazing career. Starting literally in a log cabin in Louisiana "Jimmy" Lynn moved to Kansas City when he was seventeen years of age. He had but a ninth grade education but he pursued legal studies in Kansas City while taking high school subjects at the same time. He then added a correspondence course in accounting; working during the day he studied at night. He was admitted to the bar at twenty-one and became a certified C. P. A. at age twenty-four.

Before he was thirty, largely on the strength of his character and known reputation for hard work, he was granted a large loan which he used to purchase the U. S. Epperson Underwriting Company which served the Lumberman's Alliance. Soon after that he moved into the field of reciprocal insurance for motorcar dealers. As of 1951 his company covered one fourth of the factory authorized dealers in the country. Insurance was but one facet of his far-flung business interests; he also went into citrus groves in Texas, oil leases throughout the midwest and into banking and railroads.

Mr. Lynn met Yoganandaji in 1931, in Kansas City. He later told of his experience: of how a healing light had

entered his body and removed his tension and nervousness. Upon being initiated into *Kriya Yoga* he practiced with the same determined concentration which had served him so well in the world of business. He was no ordinary man. Master told me once: "Mr. Lynn has fulfilled all of my expectations for him and he is a true saint. Years ago, when I gave him *Kriya* he went to his hotel room and meditated. The first time, he practiced for three hours, and experienced a state of ecstasy. Since then I have never seen him when he was not absorbed in God!"

In a personal letter, later published, Master revealed to Mr. Lynn that he (Mr. Lynn) had been a yogi in the Himalayas and that his coming into incarnation in the west was part of the Divine Plan. One visitor from India told me, after receiving my brother disciple's blessing, "Not even in my native land have I seen such a full manifestation of God!"

With middle-America as his base, Mr. Lynn coordinated his vast business interests and still *made* time to meditate. On his one-hundred acre estate in the suburbs of Kansas City he spent the early morning hours in exercise and inward contemplation. Mr. Lynn was also a vegetarian. He took fruit juices in the early part of the day, vegetable juices later and had a cooked meal only in the evening. His habit was to remove his shoes in the office and he preferred not to wear a necktie; when he did it was usually loosely knotted.

As often as he could this unusual man would visit California and spend weeks in seclusion — to meditate and commune with nature. Usually, he spent his time in California at Encinitas, where he had his personal quarters. There, on the lawn overlooking the blue Pacific Ocean, he would exercise and meditate. Often, Master joined him for prolonged periods of inward contemplation. Sometimes, far beyond the breaking-waves, he would float on his back; conscious only of the water, the sky and God! Once Master told us, "These days Mr. Lynn is always

lost in God. I can hardly get him to sleep or eat as he is so much absorbed in meditation."

Upon Master's passing Mr. Lynn became president of the organization and was a most inspiring example to all of us of the life which we could know. I never saw him when he was not quiet and gracious in his dealings with people. I marvelled that one so kind and, even shy, could be the dynamic head of many corporations. During a visit to California I went to Encinitas to pay my respects to Mr. Lynn. We sat on the lawn and talked for a few minutes about the Phoenix work and he asked me about my own spiritual practices and gave suggestions for improving my meditations. At his request we meditated for a time and he blessed me with words and his presence. As I prepared to leave he reached into the pocket of his beach jacket and then handed me thirty dollars, in bills. "Use this wherever you need to. Master wants you to have it," he murmured.

I was touched, not only by the gift, but because it was the sort of thing Master often did when I visited him. On more than one occasion, as he blessed me prior to my leaving him, my guru would press a few dollars into my hand or stuff them into my shirt pocket and say, "Use this for yourself. I want you to have it."

Since I had no personal needs I always used the money to further the work in Phoenix; to buy paint for the church, pay the bills or purchase extra advertising space in the local papers.

Mere words, here on the printed page, cannot even begin to impart the *love, warmth* and *concern* that I felt when in the presence of Yoganandaji and "Saint" Lynn. I have learned, over the years, that the important message is often the *consciousness* and not the verbal efforts we make.

One evening, at headquarters, I sat by Master's bed as he rested against large pillows. While careful to welcome most people in the socially acceptable manner Master

received intimate disciples during his more relaxed moments. My guru was in a happy mood and we talked for almost an hour; of God, the spiritual path and of the importance of offering all actions to the Supreme. How generous he was in giving his time and energy to us when we needed both! As we talked, Mr. Lynn came in to ask our guru's blessing before retiring to his own meditations.

"I was just telling Roy," Master said to his beaming *disciple,* "of how, years ago, you first experienced samadhi." They both chuckled at the memory. Years before, when they were both in meditation on the beach below the Hermitage, Master slapped Mr. Lynn on the chest and the latter slipped into the superconscious state. When relating the happening later, to Sister Gyanamata, Mr. Lynn told her: "What Master has given me today I can never repay him for."

Our guru expected no reward for his efforts but Mr. Lynn, in his way, more than compensated for what he received. To me, Mr. Lynn's example of the God-centered life was the greatest offering. However, over the years, my brother disciple took care of the major financial obligations of the work; he enabled Master to visit India in 1935-36, built the Encinitas hermitage, made special contributions and, before his own passing in 1955, arranged for over three million dollars to be transferred to Master's organization. Mr. Lynn was a saint but he knew of the importance of practical matters.

On February 20, 1955, at his desert farm retreat in Borrego Springs, California, Mr. Lynn entered *mahasamadhi.* At the head of his bed, where he meditated, was a small niche in the wall with photographs of our line of gurus. One of Mr. Lynn's meditation methods was to visualize each guru, in turn, and become attuned to them as he entered the silence. I was working on a ward at Ft. Riley, Kansas as a medical technician in the United States Army when a friend handed me a copy of the *Kansas City Star* which featured a long story on

the front page, telling of the life and good works of one of their city's prominent business leaders.

I had known that my brother disciple had been in seclusion for some time at his 668-acre farm in southern California and friends had occasionally shared what information they knew of Mr. Lynn's activities. Those final months had been occasions of dramatic spiritual experiences for Master's beloved successor. One story I can share now concerns a dramatic breakthrough in consciousness.

For years, whenever Mr. Lynn awakened from sleep, he would turn within to meditate. One morning, when he began to thus meditate, he did not experience the bliss and inner light which had been his natural perception. Instead, there was only darkness and an empty feeling. Concentrating steadily at the third eye Mr. Lynn finally perceived a small white light. Suddenly, *he became that light!* And, light-particle by light-particle he perceived the structure of his physical form and then; his awareness continued to extend, to take in the room, the building, the planet and the moving bodies in space. Everything was light and he was that light of which everything is formed! After a long time he came back to body awareness and rested in the bliss and power of his new realization.

Another time, during meditation, Lahiri Mahasaya appeared to him in a blaze of light. Then, Sri Yukteswar, Master and Babaji appeared. Mr. Lynn and Master floated over vast throngs of people, blessing them as they went. This experience lasted about six hours. After it, Mr. Lynn said, "Master is just as busy there as he was here, working with people in other spheres and showing them the way to spiritual freedom."

Yoganandaji confided to many of us that Mr. Lynn would experience final liberation in his life time. To completely overcome the tendencies of the subconscious is no easy thing, for as one advances on the path the temptations become more and more subtle. Because of

Mr. Lynn's basic drive and strong self-determined attitude his biggest challenge was self-surrender. He often said, "The love, the joy, the bliss I feel these days is so beautiful. Nothing else can compare to it. Sometimes I feel that I cannot stand any more; the ecstasy is so strong. But, more comes and, somehow, I stand it. I know now why Master refers to God as ever-new bliss and joy!"

I remained as minister of the Phoenix church until the fall of 1953 and then, of my own volition, made the decision to leave the Order and pursue personal goals. I was eighteen years of age when I became a monk and, after almost four years of intensive study and practice I was led from within to move out into a larger sphere of activity.

It is not always easy for one to leave the relative shelter of an ideal spiritual environment. For one thing, there is often a misguided belief, among those who live in a monastic community, which causes them to think their way is the only way. Well do I recall the general attitude which prevailed when other monks would leave the Order, before I did. We who remained felt that the ones who left were unwise and had, no doubt, missed their chance at liberation in this incarnation. It was, of course, a foolish attitude and a reflection of restricted and immature thinking on our part.

I love my brothers and sisters in Spirit and I rejoice to know that Master's organization is prospering and extending it's influence as the years go by. The current president, Sister Dayamata, whom I personally know, is an exceptional woman and the ideal person to head the movement. Since 1931, when she became a disciple, she has worked steadily to further Master's ideals. And, few can possibly know the burden of her position.

When I see advertisements in large circulation publications such as *Saturday Review, Time, Newsweek* and *The New York Times,* to mention only a few, featuring

Autobiography of a Yogi, I am pleased, because this was my guru's wish. He knew of the influence of the press and of the effectiveness of proper advertising in bringing souls to God.

Yoganandaji believed in *quantity* and *quality.* He knew that not all who were exposed to his message would respond immediately but he considered his efforts important. "I am planting seeds," he would say. "and one day they will take roots and grow." To all who did respond, he gave his unstinting personal attention.

When greeting a large audience Master would frequently tell them: "I prefer a soul to a crowd — but I love crowds of souls!"

Chapter Six

MEDITATION, THE INWARD WAY

Because an understanding of the practice of meditation is so important to one on the spiritual path, I am now led to share with you basic information; some of which may be common knowledge and some, not so common. Here, in the West, there have always been some people who knew how to meditate but it has only been in the last couple of decades that meditation has been so widely known and practiced.

Few in the Christian tradition know the secret of meditation: most Christians *pray*. Prayer has its place but it is only the beginning for one who has resolved to plumb the depths of mind and consciousness. There have been, of course, several Christian mystics who were proficient in the art of entering the silence and *seeing God face to face*. The sages of the East knew meditation to be, not only an art, but a definite science; when properly practiced results are positive and predictable.

I began my first *unscientific* efforts at meditation during high school years and got down to business in earnest after meeting my guru. And, like many others who begin

the practice, I was not sure in my own mind just what the process was all about. It took time, a lot of time, to really *understand* and *experience.* Yoga is defined as: *that practice which results in the stopping of the fluctuations of the mind.* In other words, as long as we are identified with the image-making process of the mind we cannot possibly know what it is like just to *be.* Note I did not say the goal was to make the mind blank; merely to put the agitation to rest and be conscious and aware.

While identified with the wave-action of the mind we are caught up in motion and change. When thoughts cease we rest; serene, content and self-realized.

The most authoritative text dealing with the practice of meditation is *The Yoga Sutras of Patanjali,* of which many excellent commentaries have been written by capable authors over the years. In this treatise the complete story is told; beginning with self-discipline and natural relationships with the world, proper meditation posture, reversal of the flow of attention and vital forces, inward concentration, the right way to contemplate and, finally, how to experience full realization. I am convinced that without this basic information at hand the average person is doomed to wander for years, perhaps incarnations, in ignorance of Reality.

Meditation is but *the practice of true Self-remembrance.* We are already bright, shining and complete but, for some reason, we have forgotten this fact. Meditation is natural and anyone can practice it. Once the method is learned success on the spiritual path is assured. As Maharishi Mahesh Yogi (to whom much credit must be given for making our generation meditation-conscious) has often stated: "The mind naturally moves to that condition which brings the greater happiness." Properly practiced, meditation is pleasurable, because a healthy-minded person equates true pleasure (not mere sense experience) with survival. It is not for nothing that mystics speak of being *intoxicated with the awareness of God.*

Many who have naturally gained a measure of success in meditation practice are unable to communicate just how to go about it. And, contrary to general thoughts that "meditation is more natural to Orientals than Occidentals" meditation is *natural* and can be practiced by anyone who has the patience to learn the fundamentals. I can, in one hour, teach any reasonably intelligent person how to meditate properly.

Some people are, by nature, more introspective. Others tend to be extroverts; their attention flowing outward. What matters is the soul's sincere desire. One who desires liberation in this incarnation can have it; *all controversial discussions to the contrary!* What is needed is a *yearning* to know the truth about life, a *willingness* to apply time-tested methods and the *discipline* needed to put the right currents in motion.

In the beginning it is helpful to have a meditation schedule. "It is better," Mr. Lynn once told me, "to start with regular sessions of fifteen to twenty minutes so as to start the *meditation current* (pattern) going than to practice on an irregular basis." For beginning students long meditation periods may call forth a subconscious rejection at the idea of sitting still. This is why it is often better to start with shorter but, regular, attempts. After a while we can follow our guidance; short sessions or deeper and prolonged ones. Meditation is, after all, but a *tool* we use to gain a desired result and we should not be enslaved to the practice. What would we think of a person who, for instance, kept on digging with a shovel after he had accomplished his purpose or failed to turn off the water after his lawn had been amply dampened?

Early attempts at meditation are sometimes revealing; inner lights, a sense of uplift and a greater sense of inward peace. When the *newness* wears off, we then settle down to the *real* work. We may find that we resent meditation or, the mind wanders; we think of the past, dwell on present problems or dream of future possibilities. We

may even forget that the goal of meditation is soul-realization and allow ourselves to be diverted into other streams of thought; contact with *spirits,* trying to *get something* rather than to just *be.* Or we may become overly identified with the contents of the subconscious and unconscious levels of mind.

We may just drift and move into the world of our daydreams; sexual fantasies, what *could have been,* what *might be* or flit from one useless thought-picture to another. Meditation is a positive process and not a passive *anything goes* occassion. If we approach our meditation session with zest and enthusiasm we will, for the most part, experience worthwhile perceptions.

There is no *danger* to worry about during meditation. We need not think of having to put up "a protective circle of light" to guard against the intrusion of astral forces. Nor need we think of the possibility of possession, telepathic control or of leaving the body and not getting back. Our concern should be to become soul-conscious and to commune with the highest forces of Light. When we fear negative consequences we create or attract them as a result of our own mental processes.

Numberless meditation techniques can be used to quiet the mind and focus the attention. None are secret or inaccessible. They are to be found in major texts which are available in libraries and bookstores. The key to meditation methods is for one to use the method most suitable; discovered through trial and error or as a result of having been given one (or more) by a competent guru or teacher. We are not all alike in temperament and psychological make-up. What *works* for one may not work for another. But there is no magic involved. One person can be successful in meditation by *looking into the light* while another may find *watching the breath* to be more effective. Methods are for clearing the mind of useless images so that steady concentration can be maintained.

Paramahansa Yogananda taught, as his major method, the practice of *Kriya Yoga. Kriya* is an easily learned technique whereby, through the use of breath, energies are drawn up through the spinal nerves into the brain. A *Kriya Yogi* (one who practices *Kriya)* learns to direct the flow of life-force through the major chakras. When a greater than normal volume of energy is directed through the nervous system one experiences a good feeling; pleasure, joy, ecstasy. Many, on the path to liberation, have gotten *overly involved* with pleasurable feelings, visions and perceptions of subtle realms and have forgotten that the true goal is enlightenment. Devotional types with a strong feeling for nature are more prone to become caught in illusory traps. They may chant to excess, spend too much time on the breathing exercises (not having been informed that *pranayama* refers to life-control technique) and use meditation as an escuse to withdraw from responsible action. One of the first things Yoganandaji told me was, "Remember, Roy, the spiritual path is not one of escapism." It is a path of balance and intelligent use of mind and body.

During the first year with Yoganandaji I practiced meditation at least two hours a day; an hour in the morning and another hour in the evening. As time was available I sometimes practiced two or three hours at a time. Early experiences were revealing. After calming the mind and body I would steady the attention in the third eye; fantastic geometrical patterns, constantly changing and of various brilliant colors were observed. There were visions of astral realms as well as visions projected from my own unconscious. At times a *cool* silvery-white light would appear at the crown chakra only to vanish if I looked too closely. Sometimes the light would hold steady and then, as the mind grew restless, break up into fragments. In time I learned that the secret of perceiving the light at will *was to be very calm.*

On occasion I would be filled with the sound of *aum;*

the sound was in me and around me and had *substance* to it. I experienced what it is like to be *caught up in the Presence.* Many experiences were spontaneous; such as the time I became aware that I was a small ball of light located at the lumbar plexus in the spine, *looking* up into my physical form. I could clearly see the internal organs bathed in sparkling white light. Later I learned that some yogis can assume this, and other, viewpoints at will and look into their own body, the body of another (present or at a distance) or even into plants and small particles of matter. It is only delusion which causes us to assume that we are a body. The truth is, we can know what it is like to be detached from the body and we can learn to assume any point of view at will.

During one deep meditation experience I was aroused from my inner work by a loud noise, the slamming of a door. When I went back into meditation, still relaxed, *I suddenly found myself to be a small ball of light,* perhaps two or three inches in diameter. I was in *space* and had spherical vision — seeing in all directions at once, which seemed the most natural thing to do. All about me was soft blue space and in the distance were white scintillating lights. So surprised was I at this unexpected happening, that after a short time I felt the desire to be body-oriented again. As soon as I had the thought I resumed my usual viewpoint; in the body with the attention in the center of the head.

For a period of several months, during my second year as a monk, I practiced meditation for ten or more hours every day. I would awaken at three a.m. in the morning, shower and go into the chapel. There, before the altar, upon which were photographs of Jesus and my line of gurus, I would sit in a comfortable cross-legged posture. After an invocation I chanted for perhaps thirty minutes and then practiced silent meditation, using a combination (in sequence) of techniques: watching the breath, *Kriya,* looking into the light, listening to *aum* or, at

times, observing the thought processes — trying to get to the *source* of thought.

The first meditation session of the day lasted four hours. Then I had a light breakfast of fruit and milk and worked in the office or on the church grounds. At noon I meditated another hour and took, following the session, a glass of fruit or vegetable juice as my lunch. Afternoon hours were spent in a regular work routine. Five o'clock in the evening would find me once again in the chapel, settling down for four or five hours of meditation.

Early attempts were not always successful; there were many occasions of boredom, restlessness and at times, a strong urge to give in to the desire to go to sleep. At these times, not breaking my meditative mood, I would stand up and walk about, perhaps take a cool shower, sit looking at the photographs of the masters or chant to get through the period of inertia. There were also times when four or five hours of alert meditation would pass as though they were but minutes.

During long meditation sessions, even if no dramatic superconscious experiences are had, the time can still be well spent in self-evaluation, reflection and in just being *open* for inner direction.

When one meditates regularly there is, in time, a *meditative mood* which pervades the consciousness at all times so that whenever there is an occasion, when the mind is not occupied with matters of the day, the attention naturally turns within to contemplate the truths of life. So much a part of our awareness does this mood of meditation become that when we awaken in the middle of the night we think of the Divine life and turn easily to meditation. When we awaken in the morning we are conscious of our real nature and when we retire at night we do not sink swiftly into a subconscious state but, rather, we look within and become *centered* and go to sleep in this manner. Often such sleep is not ordinary sleep but a time of spiritual perception, glorious astral experiences and consciousness-

expanding happenings. I often awaken from sleep during the hours before dawn and, without effort, find myself in a state of clear awareness wherein I *know* there is but *One Life, One Presence, One Thing* which *Is!*

At other times, while in a meditative mood, I have left my physical form during a vivid dream and traveled over vast distances in his and other worlds. I have been a ball of white light traveling at great speed and have even seen (resurrected undoubtedly from the recesses of the universal unconscious) the gods and heros of old, magnificent pageantry, shining beings and a display of such power and brilliance that mere words cannot even faintly convey the impact of the experience. After these occasions the return to this plane is accompanied by the comparison of perceptions and this realm seems for a time, drab, dull, heavy and almost lifeless. And even reasonable people have often seemed to be shallow and purposeless in their relationship to the world. No wonder Arjuna, as related in the eleventh chapter of the *Bhagavad-Gita,* exclaimed, when his intuitive sense was opened and he saw truly: "If there should suddenly rise within the sky, sunlight of a thousand suns, still it would not compare with the glory I now behold!"

As dramatic as our meditation experiences can sometimes be, still we are left with the challenge of facing up to our responsibilities and obligations in this world. The ideal is not to consider our life here to be that of making one concession after another; of putting up with things as they are for the term of our incarnation. Instead, we should try to bring our realizations through into practical application in this world and, in this way, transform our lives and the lives of others. While I had pleasing inner experiences during my early years of practice it was not until I became involved in the world as an independent truth teacher that I learned the secrets of practical living and how to be inwardly anchored in spite of external happenings.

If Spirit is the only reality then it should not matter where we are or what we do, as long as we are doing what is ours to do as we fulfill our destiny. Spirit is everywhere present. It is appearing as all things. It is the energy and the subtle forces in nature. When we see this clearly we will no longer think in terms of material vs. spiritual living; we will see *Life acting upon Itself* and all things will be in harmony.

Meditation should not be practiced with the intention of our trying to *get something.* We should practice in order to *be.* When we know who we are and we see things in proper perspective there are no problems and, therefore, no need to overcome anything.

"Sometimes, when I meditate, it seems as though my breath stops." More than one person has told me this. This should present no problem. It is natural for the physiological process to slow down when we are very relaxed. And when the energies are drawn into the spinal nerves and head there will be internal balance so breathing will be slow, shallow and sometimes, will cease for a time. When the body needs to breath it will; we need not concern ourselves over this. In fact, Lahiri Mahasaya taught his disciples a simple method relating to this natural happening. With the attention flowing into the third eye center one can be relaxed, expectant and aware. When the breath ceases of its own accord, the alternating flow of currents in the body tends to be neutralized and the image forming tendency of the mind will be at rest. "Use this time," he taught, "to dive deep into the silence."

Many who are new at the practice of meditation see lights and pictures appearing in the third eye as their attention becomes interiorized. Usually these are productions of the subconscious. If we hold the attention steady, with a *yearning* to go beyond the visions, they will fade away and other lights will appear. Eventually we will see the clear lights; sometimes blue, gold, white — or even other colors. When we can hold the blue or gold

light steady we can then know that we have gained a *measure of success* in the control of the mind.

Because we sometimes have erroneous ideas concerning various spiritual perceptions we may tend to feel that our perceptions are almost as nothing when compared to our *concept* of what spiritual consciousness must be. This may cause us to feel that we are not making progress or — as we compare where we seem to be on the path to where we want to go — we sense a great gulf and may become despondent. One rule is this: *never desire the superconscious experiences of another on the path.* It is better to unfold in our own way than compare our progress with that of another. This is one reason why, after group meditation, it is not advisable for members of the group to discuss their meditation experiences.

We need not embark upon the path with the thought of eventually becoming a healer, a teacher, a counselor or poet. What is right for us will unfold naturally in due time and there will automatically be balanced unfoldment and orderly application of inward realization.

I cannot stress too much the importance of being firmly grounded in a sensible philosophy of life. A certain percentage of truth students become confused as a result of reading too widely of theory and speculation. There is no reason why one should not read to be informed concerning various fields or, even, for temporary diversion or entertainment. But for serious study it is best, I feel, for us to refer again and again to the writings of enlightened souls; world scriptures as well as literary offerings of contemporary men and women who have gained insight into the nature of life. In this way our own inner perceptions are verified, we are motivated on the path and we receive authoritative instruction. Many people learn to meditate but have not had the necessary basic instruction, therefore, they lack direction or they meditate to get immediate, but passing, insights instead of settling down to work for total realization. Because I feel so

strongly on this point I always offer several hours of instruction before giving initiation into meditation methods and have purposely written a number of books which serious students can refer to over the years.

What about meditation experiences? Even for advanced practitioners of meditation there is the possibility that dramatic experiences can be tinged with subconscious influence. It is not uncommon for a Christian to have visions of Jesus or other Biblical characters; a Buddhist to have visions relating to the Buddhist tradition and Hindus to experience perceptions relating to Krishna, Shiva, Kali and others. Because of this, teachers of *Absolute Monism* stress the importance of our eventually being able to transcend *all forms and imaginings,* so as not to be deluded and tied to the realm of manifestation.

There is a difference between a vision and *direct perception.* A vision is the product of our own mind, even though guidance and inspiration can be gained. When we *see* what is there on a subtle level it is a different matter. But, to be consistent, even what seems to be *out there,* be it a person, thing or place is really a figment of someone's imagination. (I refer here to the idea that the *Dreamer* of all dreams has produced the worlds and all that are in them through imagining.) Visions and experiences, even of a subtle nature, can be detours on the way to enlightenment.

Yoganandaji was fond of telling the story in which a man was invited to visit a king and became so fascinated by the palace grounds that he forgot to keep his appointment. Master used to conclude the story by saying, "If the man had kept his appointment with the King and established a good rapport he could have, undoubtedly, had access to the palace grounds any time. As it was, he didn't even see the King and wasn't invited back." So it is with us; if we keep our appointment with God we will, undoubtedly, be able to have access to various levels of expression thereafter, if we want to. When

a woman disciple was near to her time of transition Master asked her if she had any unfulfilled desires. She hinted that she would like to have had experiences similar to those of another disciple whose meditation experiences were often powerful and dramatic. Master said to her: "Why do you want to wander around in the garden when you are already in the palace?" The words of our guru made her content for she realized that she was already established in the Infinite and had no real need for anything else.

Some people experience a driving surge of energy through the chakras in the upper extremities and experience degrees of ecstasy which, when the mind is truly calm, is perceived as bliss (because the attention is then transferred from the *energies* to the *initial subtle sheath* of the soul). Teachers often refer to the experience of God awareness as bliss. A higher state than bliss is *being.* However, as long as one knows the final destination on the path; ecstasy, bliss, visions and other perceptions can be experienced but they will not be considered as final.

Yoga students are aware of the term *samadhi.* There are degrees of *samadhi* and this should be understood. The term is defined as *oneness.* We can be one with light, bliss, omnipresence, all of nature or we can experience *oneness.* The lower stages are conditioned or modified by subconscious imagery, mental activity or identification with aspects of nature. Usually we experience *samadhi* first at the lower stages and then return to ordinary perceptions and viewpoints; with the memory lingering afterwards. These experiences are referred to as *sabikalpa samadhi;* that experience of oneness which is conditioned by time. The higher experience is *nirbikalpa samadhi* and is permanent even when we return to casual identification with mental workings and things of the world. In the former condition we *enter* and *return* but in the latter we *remain* aware of the truth about life at all times. I am here reminded of the response of one sage who, when

asked if he *entered* samadhi and if so, how often and how long did he experience it, said, "There is only the *One,* what is this talk about entering and leaving?"

For such souls there is no need for regular meditation sessions. They may seem to meditate, reflect or contemplate; but they move as they are inclined, for reasons best known to themselves. Sometimes they seem to ignore meditation. At other times they seem to be absorbed in profound contemplation. At other times they play the game of worshipping God in form with full attention to all of the prescribed rituals, but to them it is the Divine play and they do what is right for the moment and right for those who observe them; they are under no compulsion. No mental reservation, no karmic pattern, no social rules bind them. They do what they do because *that is what they do.* One is reminded here of Paul's words: "I am all things to all men that some might be saved." A Self-realized person, for the most part, does what he does in order to lift those around him to the awareness of the Truth.

For years my guru had a pattern to his life. He usually spent the hours from seven in the morning to near the noon hour in his private rooms, meditating and *working* for others. Afternoons were given to lunch (if he found time — and often he didn't), evenings were given to visitors, drives through the night for a change-of-pace and for talking with disciples. Late evenings saw him with correspondence, the dictation of books and other important work. He seldom retired before two or three a.m. Sometimes, however, he went into seclusion for indefinite periods of time; to think, meditate and *rejoice in the Infinite.* These times could take in days or weeks, depending upon the need and the inspiration.

"What do I do," one may ask. "when I have *arrived* or have gotten as far as I can go with my meditation practice?" The answer is: Cease, for a while from the *effort* to attain and use the quiet time to uplift others. Think of friends and associates, as well as the world in

general, and *see* for all *truth, beauty, harmony and peace.* Do not look for immediate external results; just do the inner work because it is needed by some.

Sooner or later there will come a new awareness — it always happens. Until we transcend all manifest things there must be more and more to perceive. Often, over the years, I have leveled off at a certain stage of awareness only to find that the occasion comes when I am drawn to meditation and to new depths of insight and perception. Regardless of how active we may be in our work with others, there will be times of withdrawal and occasions of in-depth God-perception and a new direction and impulse added to our life as a result. Even Jesus, according to scripture, went off now and then to be *alone with the Father.*

"When man raises one hand to God, God lowers two hands to lift man up." How often have we heard this thought? What is meant is that when a person, through meditation, is able to make permanent contact with the Reality of Life, ever-after he is drawn irresistably to the *True Source.* Once we have tasted (experienced) the nature of *Reality* we will never be content until we are successful on the spiritual path. This is why beginning seekers are urged to put forth effort. It is not easy to overcome the tendency towards inertia and restlessness; when we have gone beyond these urges, however, we find the path to be less complicated and the going more comfortable. When we have made a *break-through* we are on our way. Then it is but a matter of time.

We can meditate in any environment; at home or wherever suitable. If you are the only person in your home situation who is interested in meditation then schedule your session so it will not interfere with the family activities. Men, in this situation, can meditate at night or during their "study and thinking time" in another part of the house or at the office if they are fortunate enough to have a space which is their's alone. Women can

meditate after their husband and children are gone for the day, at night or whenever they can fit their session into the family pattern, And, to insure domestic harmony, don't meditate at bedtime and keep your mate waiting! When I was in the U. S. Army Medical Corps years ago, for the required two years, I found time to meditate at night and during weekends, at the base chapel or in any convenient parking lot or grove of trees which was handy. If one wants to meditate one will do so and there will be no excuses except for those "rare occasions." Master advised: "If you have company for a long period of time and you want to meditate for a few minutes just excuse yourself and go to your room. When you come out don't offer any explanation. Just say, 'I had a few personal things to attend to.'

Always remember that the practice of meditation is but the method of *returning* to the awareness of your real nature. We can easily complicate the process or make a real chore out of it; when, in fact, it is so very simple. I know of some people who actually feel guilty about the time they spend during meditation. When one thinks of the time taken up in sleep and useless talk, concern over the time taken for meditation seems trivial by comparison. Also, after we meditate properly we should have more energy, more command over our thoughts and actions and we should be able to function with greater effectiveness and do more work in less time than ever before!

Through concentrated effort we can *condense experience* and *actually speed up our evolution.* Meditation results in balance and enables us to coordinate our conscious and subconscious patterns (in harmony with superconscious directives) so that we accomplish our purposes in less time than one might ordinarily expect. Many on this path have noticed a *quickening* of progress and a faster working out of karmic patterns.

In order to gain benefits from meditation practice we need only to keep our "daily appointment" and give the

soul-nature full opportunity to look within and *get to know itself as it truly is.* Then it will be but a matter of practice and patience; a balance between *yearning to know* and a *willingness to wait.*

No one who embarks upon the path to Self-discovery will be disappointed for now the way is known, as charted by others before us. While no two human experiences will be the same, there is enough similarity that guidelines can be recognized. And, while group efforts can be helpful it is in *stillness* and *aloneness* that progress will be measured.

Chapter Seven

REINCARNATION, KARMA AND ASTROLOGY

In today's world the doctrine of reincarnation is widely accepted but, understanding is yet needed. As we examine the *doctrine,* the related topics of karma and astrology must be considered in proper perspective for, as serious students on the path, it is not enough for us to *believe* in reincarnation; we must comprehend the movement of the soul through the motion and activity of living things.

We know that man does not begin at conception nor does he end at the time of physical death of the body. From the moment of the soul's individualization it has been identified with nature at one level or another. Some souls have never become identified at a level lower than the light realms. Others have identified at the subtle causal level and, still others, at the astral level and the physical plane. Not all souls have the same experience or the same destiny. Some of us have come to this physical plane from more subtle levels and the human form is the only one with which we have identified. According to occult tradition there are many souls which, at the time of the manifestation of the worlds, became involved at the

level of minerals and have *come up* through plants, simple life forms and, finally, to the human form. Some are from *above* and some are from *below.*

Souls are *Spirit appearing as individualizations of Itself* and souls function at different levels because this is the game-process. Bodies need to be animated and all are enlivened by the same light. It is unlikely that a person as an individual, actually identified with a rock, a plant, marine life or birds. This theory asserts that Spirit identified with nature in order to regulate the activities of simple living things, with the various kingdoms being directed by a *group consciousness.* At a certain level along the evolutionary ladder, souls coming up were individualized. But, perhaps you did not *come up* to your present level of awareness in this manner; perhaps you *came down* from one of the higher realms in order to experience life at this level.

But, no matter, we are here now and we came from somewhere. What concerns us is our awakening from this moment. Since the average peson will not become illumined in one sojourn on this planet we must consider the doctrine of reincarnation. If it were but a matter of just moving from this level to ever-more-subtle ones there would be no need for us to study, meditate or even try to understand the mystery of life for it would just happen in the natural course of events. It stands to reason that a person who is consciously or subconsciously identified with this plane is not suited to function on more subtle ones and so, after physical death, the soul will be drawn back to this earth plane once more. The law of correspondences is exact; we gravitate to that situation in nature where we can best function.

There is more to man than body and mind. The soul is encased in five *sheaths* or coverings: a subtle vehicle formed of modified consciousness; the mental vehicle; the causal vehicle, formed of aura-electricities; the astral vehicle, sustained by life force or *prana*; and the form

of flesh. In time, all vehicles will be transcended but for the average person, at transition, the *first four vehicles remain* and the soul functions through them on the astral plane between incarnations. We carry with us, from incarnation to incarnation, our *feeling nature* and our *memories* and *abilities.* When we take on a new flesh body we bring with us, in a somewhat *dormant* state, all of our conditionings which are recorded in the subtle vehicles.

When a soul is deluded it tends to create problems because of over-identification with *gross* creation. Desires, urges, whims, fears, hurts and rejections and the accumulation of *unconsciously accepted* data make up our karmic condition. Karma is nothing more than subtle mental impressions, stored over a period of time. Thus, we become programmed and tend to react to life — not intelligently, using reason — but according to how we are conditioned. Also, when we were born into this world we identified with the inherited traits given to us by our parents and we took on beliefs and attitudes of others who shared our early environmental years. Considering all of this one might well despair of ever getting free or of overcoming the weight of karma.

Just because we are born with certain conditionings and brought up in an environment, over which we seemingly had little control, there is no need for us to accept a fatalistic attitude and feel ourselves to be doomed to a specific life pattern. The secret is this: the less aware we are, the *more* we are influenced by our conditionings and by the forces in nature — the more aware we are, the *less* we are influenced by our conditionings and by the influences in nature. Man can decide to rise superior to internal and external conditions and this ability to be self-determined makes the difference.

I have talked with many people who justify their limitations by relating them to karmic patterns, accumulated in a previous incarnation. Their attitude is, "I've got to work this out over a period of time. This is the way it

seems to me. Besides, a *reader* told me so and my horoscope confirms it!"

Let us look at this matter of *life-readings.* Supposedly, a sensitive person *tunes in*, either while conscious or in trance, and intuitively discerns the karmic condition of the subject. Then he tells the subject about previous experiences on this plane and ties the whole story together in a nice neat package. Sometimes the information *makes sense* and sometimes it is pure *nonsense.* Even if such a reading makes sense it may not be true for a *sensitive* can, at times, fabricate a story which will *seem* true by attuning to the subject's subconscious, noting certain personality traits and by being a reasonably good judge of human nature. I know many who have gotten started on the spiritual path as a result of having such a reading. But, what is past is past; and I agree with *master teachers* who state emphatically that there is no point for one who knows the steps to soul liberation for getting involved with such phenomena.

When I am discussing this subject in public someone will ask, "What about the Cayce readings?" Let us understand one thing; Edgar Cayce was a most unusual man and, I feel, came on the scene at the right time in order to bring forth information which would alert the masses to great possibilities. I feel his mission was unique and his pattern his alone. I do not feet that seekers on the path should try to emulate him. Cayce, himself, was more concerned with encouraging others to seek God-realization than he was in trying to develop them along his line of personal work. It seems to me when others advertise themselves to be "in the tradition of Edgar Cayce" as far as giving *readings* they not only do the man's name a disservice but also fail to fulfill their own particular life style.

I know of more than one marriage relationship where one person is kept practically in bondage to the whims of the other because of the belief that, in a previous incarnation, it was "the other way around" and "this is

the time to balance the books." I know of a specific instance where the wife was suffering from pains in the lower bowel. Instead of being examined by her medical doctor or discussing the problem with her minister she engaged the services of an itinerant *reader.* She was duly informed that in a previous incarnation she was one of a number in a harem and, naturally very desirable. In that incarnation she took some precious gems from the bedroom and swallowed them in order to smuggle them to her quarters. When the theft was noted all of the women in the harem were purged but no stones were passed. The stones were lodged in the woman's lower intestine and remained there for the duration of that particular incarnation. Of course, she experienced some pain and could not tell anyone of her actions, so had to suffer in silence. She was told that the pain carried-over to this incarnation. Upon having this explanation presented to her she was relieved and her lower abdominal pain went away. Proof? Not at all. The pain may have been psychosomatic, reinforced by the colorful tale. Another possibility lingers: Perhaps she really had an organic problem and the pain was a warning signal — anesthetized by the suggestion. An unpleasant thought, to be sure.

We can easily tell our karmic condition by examining our attitudes, feelings and general condition in life. Some have had their inmost tendencies and conditionings confirmed as a result of having their horoscope cast by a responsible astrologer. Since all of nature works according to law it is no accident that we were born when and where we were. We are not victims of our horoscope, of course, for the ancients taught that the soul comes into this world at a time and place *when the karmic patterns* are in mathematical harmony with celestial forces. Which leads me to feel that it might be well to also try to set up a chart for the approximate moment of conception, for this initial contact with our planet must also be extremely significant.

When the pull of the subconscious is strong enough the soul "goes to sleep" on the astral level and is drawn to this plane; to parents, the environment and subtle conditions which exactly relate to karmic needs or intentional desire. Not all who come into this world are drawn; some choose to come and even they adapt to natural law as they can come to realize once they awaken to the point of being able to examine their karmic tendencies and soul urges.

What is not taught in our institutions of learning today is that early astronomers were not only interested in the movements of heavenly bodies but *also in the influence of such bodies on other expressions of nature.* We know, for instance, that Hindu scriptures going back to at least 3100 B. C. contain precise information dealing with heliocentric motion of planetary bodies in our solar system, the earth's form, reflected light of the moon, the earth's daily revolution, the presence of fixed stars in the Milky Way, the law of gravitation and much more useful data. All things in nature are forever interchanging their influences. Astrology, the study of man's response to planetary stimuli, shows how human beings are really tied to distant heavenly bodies, on a subtle level, through flows of energy. As we study the philosophy of astrology we learn more about the workings of the universe as an *electrical phenomenon.* Astrology, along with medicine, mathematics, music and architecture, was one of the great sciences of the ancient world. It was practiced by the Egyptians, Chinese, Persians, Chaldeans and the leaders of the great civilizations of the Americas. Undoubtedly much information regarding this and other sciences filtered down through the aforementioned cultures from Atlantis.

Astrology is divisible into two distinct sciences. The *esoteric* science deals with the mysteries of the cosmos, the spiritual, intellectual, moral and physical chemistry of the world. It reveals the anatomy and psychology of what men call God. It sets forth an explanation of existence

and a moral relationship between things. It reveals the mathematical pattern of creation. *Exoteric* astrology is usually considered to be the predictive aspect; though this may not be an exact definition.

We know that man is composed of two parts: the Spirit which animates the body and the body itself. Therefore, in order to properly understand astrology we must understand the nature of man, both visible and invisible. Pythagoras, who gained his knowledge from the wise men of Egypt, India and Greece stated that planets moved about the sun. *In space there are stars and each star is a sun and these suns are manifestors of pure energy which sustain the worlds. Planets about the sun reflect the energies which stream forth and also distribute the flows. Channeled through the planets the energy is converted into positive or negative qualities.*

So-called material bodies are composed of energy which has a certain *emanational* power. The physical energies of these elements are referred to as *force* and force exerts an influence upon structures which are in proximity to that force. Man, we are advised, receives three kinds of energy: *spiritual* energy from the planets, *physical* energy reflected from the planets and *elementary* energy from the earth upon which he resides. Greater or superior forces act upon and influence lesser or inferior forces.

Spirit regulates creation through these streams of force. The One Life flows through the sun and is converted and channeled through the planets. Over a period of time, as a result of inner revelation and outer investigation seers were able to discover the quality of force emanating from certain suns, modified by specific planetary arrangements. Then they were able to recognize the relationship of these forces to the behavior of man as well as other living things. The sage *Patanjali* wrote: "Contemplation of the moon and pole-star brings intuitive knowledge of the stars, their groupings and

motions." Also: "By contemplating the nature of the elements and their qualities comes mastery of them."

Students of the occult sciences know that human beings operate within a magnetic field. Indeed, when the soul was first individualized and began its journey to this plane it was *caught* in a magnetic field and then the various sheaths were added at different levels of involvement. Remember, our fate is not sealed just because of the arrangements of the planets at our time of birth. Man is not what he is because of the heavenly pattern; the pattern merely indicates, to one who can read the chart clearly, why man came when he did and what his potential might be.

The planet earth consists of a physical body with a series of electric and magnetic fields. We are bound to the sun by subtle cords, or lines, of force. The magnetic field of our planet is nourished by the sun and the entire solar system pulsates and forces circulate, not unlike the circulation of energies within the physical body of man. Also, we are linked, through the sun, to the rest of the cosmos. The study of *correspondences* reveals the great truth that all living beings are part of one magnificent pattern. This is one of the greatest lessons we can gain from an objective study of the philosophy of astrology. Then, with deeper study the intellect and intuition become blended in a natural, harmonious manner and man becomes a sage; one who sees clearly.

More depends upon the position of the sun and moon at the time of physical birth than upon the positioning of the other planets in the solar system. The sun and moon cast their gathered or reflected powers into our magnetic atmosphere, harmoniously or discordantly according to how they are aspected or modified by the rays of major planets. The astral system of the human body, with six inner spinal centers below the brain, each with dual polarity, is inter-related with the twelve zodiacal signs. In this way man is influenced by an inner as well as an

outer universe. The forces of nature as well as the soul force and the yearning to know the truth about life works to refine the body so it can be a more fit instrument through which consciousness can express.

We must remember that we are bound by inner and outer forces only as long as we are spiritually unawakened. To the degree that we are aware of our true nature, as Spirit individualized, we are able to transcend, neutralize or *work in harmony* with cosmic forces. An awakened person does not violate the laws of nature but is able, through attunement with nature and deeper understanding, to experience proper timing in all things.

There are ways to neutralize karma and to awaken intuition so as to enable one to live in soul awareness at all times. Prayer, meditation, consultation with qualified teachers, the grace of the guru and the practice of self-discipline results in neutralizing the effects of past mistakes. Discordant influences in the environment can also be rendered harmless. Yoga teachers explain the three classifications of karma as follows: karmic patterns presently being formed because of one's thoughts and feelings; patterns now working out or coming to the surface; deep-seated patterns which will come to the surface at some time in the future, either when they are restimulated or when the occasion is suitable.

We take the direct approach, as is befitting a responsible truth student. We handle the first classification of karma by *ceasing* to form new patterns by giving up ego-motivation, living a selfless life and by living in tune with the Infinite. In time, we learn to *live by grace;* in spontanous harmony with inner and outer forces while fulfilling our personal destiny. For this the practice of karma yoga is prescribed; we render useful service with no thought of personal gain. We do what we must do in a constructive manner without thought of praise, reward or recognition. Nor do we cease from right action even in the face of blame, adversity or non-recognition by others.

We function with objective understanding; seeing life as a game-situation and playing our part fully without trying to "make something of it."

We are not to blame the present because of the past. We are not to point to past incarnations, early environmental conditioning or the conscious or unconscious abuse of others. We are to live in the joyous moment; having given up attitudes (and feelings) of lack of worth, guilt over past actions (real or imagined), regret, fear and anxiety. In this way we gradually neutralize negative conditionings in the subconscious. A positive attitude, in time, removes tracings of unwanted karma.

Along with the above, we handle the second classification of karma *by refusing to react* to internal or external happenings or events. We learn to see the *cause* of things and in this way we become immune to any force acting upon us. In time we gain understanding and the motive power of forces ceases to exercise any influence.

The third classification of karma, the deep-seated tracings of which we have little or no awareness, are automatically neutralized or "burned out" as we live in the awareness of our soul nature. There is little good to be gained by digging about in the contents of the unconscious. In fact, preoccupation with such recordings can lead to over-involvement with images and memories relating to the past and cause us to avoid the responsibility of living fully in the present. It is my contention that too many people are overly preoccupied with the images in the unconscious. One may be involved in depth-therapy for years and never really get around to the business (and joy) of productive living. One of the best ways to become free from the past is to live in the present with a goal-oriented attitude. In this way one makes *gains* and the deeper conditionings are automatically neutralized.

William Glasser, M. D., has written a revealing book, *Reality Therapy,* in which he tells of his success in dealing with patients over the years by encouraging them

to face life, reject irresponsible behavior and learn to behave in a healthy-minded way.

Yogananda's guru, Sri Yukteswar, being not only an illumined master but an astrologer of repute, occasionally advised *some* disciples concerning the beneficial use of gems and metals, worn in a bracelet, next to the skin. For general purposes he prescribed a bracelet formed by twisting strands of copper, silver and gold into a single unit. The exact weights of the metals had to be in accordance with the need in mind. He also suggested the use of gems of a certain carat weight (usually two carats or more) after a careful astrological and intuitional evaluation of the disciples condition. It must be said here that, not unlike many medications prescribed by medical doctors, the *gift of faith* carries a powerful suggestive influence when metals and gems are properly advised.

The right use of gems and metals is not without occult significance. Many *Old World* alchemists were versed in the knowledge of similar remedies. The theory is this: minerals are formed in the earth as a result of the influence of certain planetary radiations upon the *crystalizing energies* in nature. In this way various metals and minerals have been related to specific planets. Therefore, if a competent astrologer can see, ahead of time, which planetary influences will be exercising a discordant force upon a person, according to what the situation will be, the astrologer can prescribe the wearing of metals or gem stones which will have a *repelling* effect for that time. With this information we can begin to see how and why it might be possible for one to correctly evaluate the subject under discussion.

Many people today claim that the wearing of copper has been found to be helpful in neutralizing the pain of rheumatism and arthritis; and other metals have been found useful in the treatment of corresponding ailments. Opportunity for research in this field is wide open today. Adepts of the Western Tradition have been known, over

the centuries, to make wise use of gems, set in rings, to ward off influences (both planetary and mental radiations), stimulate internal secretions, activate energies in the body, excite subtle forces in the chakras and, in general, demonstrate a greater dominion over nature as related to the soul's intention and guidance.

Accurate information regarding the helpfulness of sound, radiation, color and proper environment in relationship to man's life has not yet been fully accumulated.

I feel that it behooves us to be educated in diverse matters and, if we are so inclined, to investigate (intelligently) the spiritual basis for the right use of astrological lore. It is not sufficient merely to try to outwit trends and possible future effects on one's day-to-day life. Even when confronted with the effects of external (as well as internal) forces which have a bearing on our lives, the way to handle adverse influences is to be patient and non-reactive. In this way we can avoid complications. Also, it is well to be inwardly anchored in the awareness of our true nature. Negative situations will, in time, pass away. This is the great lesson to be learned from our observation of life experience. There can never be any permanent peace of mind until we are free of inner conflicts and stabilized in the realization of our divine nature.

Even if aspects and circumstances are not desirable at the moment, according to present evaluation, we cannot always wait for a *better time.* Some people are subconsciously conditioned to be *losers* instead of *winners.* They will never succeed merely by waiting. They must learn to initiate action and put into motion positive causes which will result in desired effects. This will eventually bring them into a harmonious working relationship with life. The average person, being almost total effect of inner and outer forces, (past decisions which have been forgotten and planetary influences) is almost entirely the effect of such things and is, therefore, extremely predictable. A person with imagination and insight, on the other hand, does not

seem to be influenced by forces either internal or external but rides with the current. Upon close examination he will be found to be working in harmony with karmic and and planetary influences.

Not only are people influenced by forces in nature and by the thoughts of the masses but *races* of people and the consciousness of the planet is also influenced.

Believe it or not, there is in India a collection of manuscripts known as *The Book of Bhrigu,* containing information about people in ages past, those now living and those yet to be born on earth. This mass of material was compiled centuries ago by many knowledgeable astrologers who worked under the common name of *Bhrigu.* Also, many *scriptures* of the world were compiled in this manner, by un-named men who used a common alias. Thousands of people have been truly amazed when, consulting a current custodian of the *Bhrigu* collection, they have been informed of their name, place of birth, secret dreams and major happenings of this incarnation. Apparently, a representative of this collection of data notes the time of a person's first question and then goes through stacks of material until he finds the records relating to that *time.*

A question often presented in these matters is, "Do we meet again, from incarnation to incarnation?" The answer is that we do — if we have *rapport* with one another. Again, the law of correspondences applies; we are drawn to those with whom we have much in common. This is true in relationships where there is strong attraction as well as those where there is strong aversion. Not every instance of strong attraction or strong aversion need be traced to a previous relationship. It may be just a matter of *good chemistry*, on all levels, or — the opposite! I feel there is too much made of this idea of, "Oh, I've known you before because the *vibrations* are good!" Or "I've known him (or her) before because of the attachment — in spite of the hopelessness of it all!" We

need not look to a previous relationship just because we are attracted or repelled. Here, as often as not, the *vibrations* have the say and are the major influence.

So we come to a short discussion of *soul-mates.* Yoganandaji used to say, speaking of those in *need,* "soul-mates" could be readily met and the relationship justified. What he really said was: "If you are looking for human companionship you can find a *soul-mate* on every other street corner." A bit direct but, just the same, close to the truth.

As I see it *there are* souls which meet time and time again to share their experiences and this is a beautiful relationship. I know of couples who have strong feelings of togetherness and who recall the times of sharing at other times and places. Sometimes they recall run-of-the-mill experiences (which is not to cast any aspersions at all) and, sometimes, they recall times of mutual happiness and soul-communion in Atlantis, Egypt, India and China (because these cultures precede the Western ones) and their present togetherness is but the fulfilling of past agreements.

I know that the marriage agreement often binds (and I mean this in the most beautiful sense) from one earth sojourn to another. A true blending of male-electric and female-magnetic can be a meaningful and worthwhile relationship over a long period of time, in this and other worlds. Some souls make up a family unit time and time again; again, the relationships may be of a brief duration.

It is commonly accepted that the soul alternates sexual roles from incarnation to incarnation. I cannot agree with the philosophy which suggests that this is *necessary* if the soul is going to gain a well-rounded development. Mystics stress that souls *awaken* and that experience is not required for enlightenment. Perhaps some souls do play alternate roles but I have found no real evidence to support this contention. Scriptural support can be found to indicate that souls remain either male or female; since the soul is polarized at the time of individualization and is, from that

moment onward either male-electric or female-magnetic. Feelings, traits, attitudes and characterisitcs noted in a person which may seem to hint of a reversal of sexual roles from one incarnation to another may have no other basis than present-incarnation psychological conditioning. Or, they may suggest a subconscious rejection of one's nature.

The metaphysical-occult grapevine carries along interesting tidbits concerning people, places and events as related to our theme of reincarnation. Some stories may contain more than a germ of truth (if there can be such in the realm of illusion) and others are surely the output of imaginative minds. One of the detours on the path to enlightenment is useless speculation about things which are fascinating to dwell upon but in no way adds to personal insight. It is common gossip, for instance, that Alexander the Great returned to play the role of Adolph Hitler; Napoleon Bonaparte that of Benito Mussolini; Abraham Lincoln, John Kennedy; and, believe it or not, William the Conqueror (for reasons best known only to himself) returning in the role of Paramahansa Yogananda.

Rumors are always more tantalizing when at least one corroborating story can lend *reasonable* support. During my early years with Yoganandaji more than one brother disciple told me in *confidence* of the William the Conqueror-Yogananda story. I never heard from Master's lips that the story was or was not true although he did say on one occasion that sometimes masters play different roles from one incarnation to another "because this is God's show." One monk told me in hushed tones that he had been awakened several nights in a row by the sounds of metal-against-metal in the lower hall outside of his room. It sounded as though someone were walking down the hallway while wearing articles of metal. One night this monk rushed out into the hall when he heard the familiar sounds and saw the door leading outside, shut. Running to the door he looked out but saw no one. A

few days later he "heard" that on the final night of the strange happening, shortly after he had tried to see the source of the sounds, that Master was sitting in his study on the third floor of the building. The night was warm and a large window was open. Suddenly, there appeared on the window ledge a soldier dressed in uniform, but as though he had stepped into the present time-slot from a few centuries back. As the story goes the soldier looked beseechingly at Master and asked, "Release me!" Master raised his hand in blessing and the apparition vanished. The explanation for the whole occasion was that this particular soldier had been disobedient when serving under William the Conqueror and had been looking for the *William the Conqueror* soul in order to ask forgiveness and be released from the karmic debt. Not an impossible happening, of course, but as I have stated, the story came to me at least second hand.

Some students have accepted a rather grim plan for future progress on the path; they think in terms of liberation after many returns to this planet and then after having worked their way through a long chain of circumstances and experiences on astral and causal levels. Others even think in terms of expanding awareness to the point of being able to take charge of a planet or a solar system. It is also hinted at in some literature that if a liberated soul cannot find a universe which is to his liking he can just *create* one. Then there is the unfounded teaching that the soul must experience every possible earth situation before "graduating." This theory claims that we must appear under many guises, in all races and cultural systems and even move through the twelve zodiacal signs in proper sequence in order to become well rounded and fully developed.

Master teachers, as far as I know, do not teach a definite pattern of experience for all souls. If one in the light realms decides to come into this world it stands to reason that his entry will be in accord with natural

law. But such a one will come into a situation of his choosing and under the planetary influences which best enable him to function. Regardless of seeming appearances such a person is not bound in any way. Without our being able to truly know a soul's destiny and purpose for being here we should be hesitant in drawing hasty conclusions based on, what seems to us, to be evidence.

Concerning the time spent on subtle astral planes between physical embodiments, again, there is no set rule. It depends upon many things: our desire or yearning to return, our inability to function on the astral level and whether or not conditions are suitable on the planet for the fulfillment of our purposes. Some people return almost immediately while others remain on the astral plane for decades or even centuries.

Krishna, as quoted from the *Bhagavad-Gita* stated, "It is better for a person to attempt to fulfill his own destiny and fail in that attempt than to emulate the life pattern of another and be successful in doing so." In other words, the important thing should be for one to learn to know himself and then be *himself* rather than go through life as an imitation. How many people in today's world are living a lie; afraid to express because of fear of failure or the negative opinions of others? How many are conforming in order to be *safe?* How many harbor secret dreams which will come true *someday?* One of the reasons why the early Church Fathers dropped the teaching of reincarnation, according to historians, is because they felt too many people who accepted the doctrine were complacent; holding the attitude of, "Well, if I don't make it this time maybe I will the next."

Then, there is another trap. The thought that one can provide for the future by building up *good karma* now. That is, one can program positive causes into the subconscious now and reap the effects (rewards) later; in heaven or in the next incarnation. At best, such an attitude indicates an inability on the part of the individual

to accept life in all its fullness now and tends to keep the person in a condition of wishful thinking.

Is there a way to overcome the need to return to this plane against one's will? Mystics say there is. The way is not so much a matter of working to get away from this world but, rather, that of awakening to the realization of the soul nature. Strange to say, some who are illumined find no difficulty in functioning freely in this world and, therefore, have no compulsion about leaving it. Without attachment and with no sense of aversion they move in the awareness of their soul nature; they are the *living free.* Supremely content and not in bondage to past, present or future happenings.

Chapter Eight

THE FINAL OVERCOMING

Most people have an innate sense of their own immortality but few know the art of consciously leaving this world. And concerning the nature of subtle planes beyond, even less is known. Let us now examine, in the light of reason and by calling upon our intuitive sense, the process by which one is able to overcome the final *enemy* — that which men refer to as *death.*

I would like to see the term *death* stricken from our vocabulary because there is no such condition; there is a change in location, a change of viewpoint, a change as far as which vehicles we express through (physical, astral, causal, mental and subtle form) but there is never, at any time, a possibility of our ceasing to be. *We are forever.* Sages have known for a long, long time the art of consciously departing this world and I will now share with you some of their realizations, as I understand them.

The average person moves from this world to the astral levels and back again with precision; driven by subconscious compulsion. He lives in a *dream condition* relative to what can be known and functions, for the most part, in the realms of illusory manifestation, seldom glimpsing Reality. Even when man gains some degree of

mastery over his movements through time and space he is usually in bondage. The average person knows he is *here* in the physical world but does not know *how* he managed to get here. When we were *born* in this world we *died* to the realm previously known. This is what transition is: a moving from one realm to another.

Ideally, we should be educated on matters having to do with making an orderly transition; a natural experience common to all. Generally, there is a shroud of mystery, a refusal to study the phenomena or just a plain unwillingness to *look* at the subject. How often, when one near to us leaves the world, do we soon forget them, gloss over the happening with culturally-accepted rites or, in some cases, find ourselves the victim of morbid feelings and thoughts because of what we *should have done* or because of *what we did but wished we hadn't* relative to our association with the person who, until transition, was in a position to be communicated with through *ordinary* means?

Let us take, as an example, the experience of one who has lived a number of years and is ready, because of reasons of age or illness, to move to a new sphere of action. It is not uncommon for one to grow *world-weary* after a time on earth and to psychologically prepare for the next progressive step in the direction of unfoldment. This may take the pattern either as a *rest* on the astral level before reincarnating or it may be that one is done with his level and is ready to explore others. If one is conscious the move can be beautiful (from his point of view) or it can be automatic and not cognized on the conscious level.

In both instances the steps are the same; first there will be a *psychological acceptance* marked by an inward letting go of things having to do with this plane. Then, the vital energies begin to flow toward the upper parts; the heart, third eye and crown center. If a person is fully conscious he will experience a fantastic inner display of

light and color as the energies reverse their flow and he may also experience a *playback* of major emotional incidents relating to the current embodiment. When large volumes of life current are run through the brain, dormant memories, long held in reserve, can be activated and will be observed on the inner screen of the mind in full detail. Major experiences will be *relived* with all of the original intensity and it is here that one can be self-judged according to his *reaction* to the experience. The resulting change in attitude can determine the immediate astral experience and this is why the master teachers stress the importance of objectivity during this particular experience. After all, what we see and feel is but the result of subconscious recordings and is not the real nature of the soul. Our perceptions and subsequent subconscious recordings which have to do with this (or any illusory plane) are not to be taken as *real.* To mistake illusory things as permanent and binding is to miss the whole point.

The attention should be one-pointed so that the thoughts do not scatter, otherwise confusion will result and this will lead to identification with lower astral realms which, in turn, will require more effort to transcend. The best way is to *go out* through the *third eye* or the *crown chakra* (at the top of the head). With proper practice in meditation we can learn to steady the attention and move out, when the time comes, in full control of our awareness. We can observe the happening as in a detached manner.

There is a method which one can use to prepare for conscious transition. At night, while going to sleep, we can observe the process. In time we will be able to remain alert and objective while the shift in consciousness takes place. After a while there will be no alteration as far as attitude is concerned regardless of the changes from conscious to subconscious, to dreams, visions and astral perceptions. We will observe at all times, aware but detached. This is the same attitude to take while leaving the body at the final moment.

People who are going through the terminal phases of an illness should be allowed the priviledge of being alone with their thoughts so they can make necessary adjustments in attitude and gather their forces in readiness for leaving the body. Also, a member of the family, a friend who is capable, or any person proficient in the practice of meditation can *sit in the silence* with the patient. If the patient is interested one can also explain to him the steps taken at the time of transition and give some idea of the nature of the astral realms.

Our experiences during transition determine, to an extent, our future. For instance, it is common for one to perceive the *clear white light* upon leaving this plane and we should know how to *merge in this light* in order to transcend mental and emotional conditionings. If the attention is not one-pointed, if there is a scattering of attention, one can be overcome by the confusion of mental images which are stirred into activity as the vital forces withdraw from the body. Or if one does not know of the clear light ahead of time he may withdraw from it when he sees it and go to sleep; moving onto the astral plane in a subconscious condition. If the attention is properly directed and the person remains calm and objective the astral levels can be transcended so that he will either move to a very bright causal plane or go right through the *darkness* into the *true heaven* — the realm of perfected souls.

We tend to experience what we anticipate: lower astral, higher astral, causal or celestial realms. Some yoga masters who want to return to earth in a new body in order to continue their work *visualize,* before they leave the body, the place where they will return. Then, after nine months or longer, they reincarnate according to their desire.

I feel that we should remain on earth until the purpose for coming here has been fulfilled. While my early years were not difficult I found it a little frustrating to have to spend the first two decades in adapting to this world. I

know, two decades compared to eternity, is not much but why should we repeat the growing — up experience when we can just remain here without any break in awareness or continuity of action?

A few years ago I was visiting Dr. Ernest Wilson at Unity Temple in Kansas City. We talked a while and exchanged books. As he autographed a copy of his, *Have You Lived Before,* prior to presenting it to me he wrote, "To Roy — many happy returns!" We had a good laugh over the implications of his inscription and agreed that we really didn't care for the thought of returning here in the usual manner.

It is common for helpers from the astral level to come to a person as his time approaches for making his transition. These friends or teachers meet us as we begin to leave the body and show us into the next world. Highly advanced people are ushered into the Infinite by radiant *light beings.* If one has a guru, the guru, or one in his line, will be there at the time of leaving the body.

It occasionally happens that a person is thrown out of his body as a result of an accident and, instead of shifting into astral perception, the soul will still be attuned to this plane, functioning in the astral body but invisible to others who are physically embodied. More than one person has attended his own funeral service and has even remained earth-bound for a time either because of attachments here or because of not knowing how to shift his attention to the subtle planes. Usually, if one in this position will meditate or, go to sleep, the complete transition will be made without effort.

The ideal way to leave this world is during conscious meditation. When one has accepted the fact of transition and his *time has come* he can then enter into deep meditation and withdraw from the body. A brother disciple of mine accomplished this. Dr. M. W. Lewis, longtime disciple of Yoganandaji, was a dentist in Boston. When he retired he settled in California where he and his wife,

Mildred, lived in an apartment on the grounds of the Self-Realization Fellowship Hermitage at Encinitas. Dr. Lewis was also a minister of the movement and maintained an active teaching schedule. Toward the end he was hospitalized because of a heart ailment. Gradually, his health improved.

One day Mildred visited him and he asked her to remain and share dinner, which she did. Then, they meditated together; she, sitting in a chair and he, sitting in the lotus pose on the bed. Mrs. Lewis heard a sound similar to that made when one practices *Kriya Yoga* and draws the vital currents up the spine into the head. She opened her eyes to look at her husband; his face was lit by an inner radiance. Then his head dropped and he was gone! Many stories can be told of how people have left, at will, in a similar manner.

While we may miss those who have been close to us, when they go it is best if we do not grieve because there is the possibility that we may cause them mental or emotional pain as a result of our telepathic communion. A memorial service can be held, during which time the recently departed person is *loved, blessed and released* to continue on his or her way. This can also be a time of therapy for those who remain on this plane for a while; a time when we come to terms with our feelings and attitudes relative to the person who has gone ahead — when we release feelings of guilt, regret and grief if necessary.

Since the person is not the body the corpse can be disposed of in the most efficient and economical way possible. For this, cremation is most suitable. There is something morbid and materialistic about the custom of preserving bodies or placing them in the ground or in a vault. Also, it seems a waste of time, money and land to create and maintain cemetaries and memorial parks.

I know that some people make a big production about the preservation of bodies. Some even hold onto the thought of eventual resurrection of the body — a fantastic sight to

behold if it were to happen on a mass scale! Then, there is the current promotional effort where people can, for a fee, have their body frozen — against the time when a cure for the disease which caused death might be discovered. What the proponents of this plan fail to tell is that when the soul leaves the body it will not return. There is also tissue damage as a result of freezing. I see this as one more commerical venture in which gullible people are fleeced out of money as a result of their fear and ignorance.

In some circles there is the theory that to really be successful in a spiritual sense one must learn to *translate:* resolve the physical form into finer substance and take it along into the other realms. I know of no instance where this has actually happened. Rumors we have — factual cases? Not one. The body, made up of the substance of this world, is no longer needed when we leave it.

What is it like on the inner planes? There is great variety depending upon where we look. Some people find themselves on an astral planet where activities continue much the same as they do on this plane. There are families and social groups. Children are *born* to parents and come from the subtle causal levels. Just as many people move from earth to astral level and back again, so do people move from the astral level to the causal plane and back to the astral.

Some astral planets are beautiful and some are dark and murky. There are astral planes where harmony reigns and the environment could well be described as heavenly; there are planes where unenlightened people live which are extremely chaotic. Wherever we find selfish or deluded people, even on the astral level, we will also find exploitation, war and suffering. Battles on the astral level are fought with *energy flows, sound* and *thought.* One who is spiritually aware need not be concerned with the prospect of ever visiting the lower astral planets.

We make ourselves ready for the level of after-earth perception by clearing our consciousness while we are

here. Materialistic people will soon return to this plane. Partially awakened people will have more time to enjoy astral plane experiences before returning. Those who are more awakened will not return but will continue through successive levels on the journey to final liberation. On astral planets there are illumined teachers, as there are on earth, who act as saviors, showing others the next step to freedom.

It is sometimes possible to *see* into various astral, causal and celestial realms during controlled meditation or the proper use of our dreams. Swami Muktananda Paramahansa, for instance, tells of his early perceptions while looking into a golden light during meditation: "I once saw into *Swarga-Loka* (one of the heavens or light realms). The men and women there resembled us but they were much taller, healthier and handsome. They welcomed me."

Accomplished yogis know how to concentrate at the heart center, throat center, third eye or crown chakra — according to the inner realm they want to visit. Then they see into the desired realm or they hold the attention steady while going to sleep and experience astral-dreams wherein they communicate with people on different levels. I have communed with Yoganandaji and others in this manner. One thing I noticed is that even though a person *left* a body which showed some signs of age, when I see the person on the astral level a short time later they are bright, vital and have the appearance of being in their prime.

It is not advisable for the average person to dwell to any great extent upon efforts to communicate with people who have gone on to the astral plane. Not only can this become a preoccupation and lead one from the spiritual path but there is always the great possibility of being deceived. If we need advice or guidance we can seek it from sources on earth. Yoganandaji often said, "When I am gone do not look for me in a seance room because

I will not be there!" I have heard of stories concerning Master's appearance at a seance and I have read transcripts of mediumistic trance efforts, during which time he was *presumed* to be talking through the medium, and in every instance found the *evidence* to be shallow and trite. Master teachers simply do not approve of, recommend or give credence to mediumship, seances or overfascination with psychic phenomena.

A key to attaining spiritual freedom is for us to think in terms of being *self-complete* and *now;* not to be forever thinking in terms of future experiences in this or, other, worlds. All that we perceive now or might perceive in the future has to do with the manifest worlds which are illusory in nature. We can stand free of all game-situations if we *center* our attention and remain at peace within ourselves. When the time comes for us to drop the physical body we can be assured of remaining stable and aware if we will either direct our attention to the crown chakra or the heart center; then *let happen* what will.

We may have many experiences and play a great variety of roles but the secret of true happiness lies in our ability to always know *who* we are; not the personality, the body, the mind or karmic patterns. Meditation and Self-acceptance guarantees liberation.

Chapter Nine

KUNDALINI IN ACTION

According to occult lore the human body is a miniature universe: a microcosm in which is to be found all the individual forms of life and geographical configurations of the manifest worlds, from the lowest to the highest. To see this one must grasp the fact of the existence of the invisible side of nature.

As the soul *emerges* into involvement with matter it takes on vehicles, five in number. At the level of the *causal realms* five aura-electricities are produced in a magnetic field surrounding the soul; thus the causal vehicle is formed. Electricities in this instance are evolved from a polarized magnetic field and are endowed with the three attributes: the positive attributes of these five electricities are the *root cause* of the organs of sense: smell, taste, sight, touch and hearing. The neutralizing attributes of these five electricities are the organs of action; excretion, generation, speech, motion and the ability to exercise manual skill. The negative attributes of these five electricities *project* in the direction of objects of external desire and cause the soul to go outward into further involvement with matter in quest of fulfillment.

The above mentioned *fifteen attributes,* with dual polarity, plus *mind, intelligence, ego* and *feeling* make

up the subtle material body of the soul which is sustained by life-force. A further extension results in the appearance of grosser matters — reflections of negative electrical attributes — and they appear as solids, liquids, fiery, gaseous and ethereal substances. These form the material body of the soul and — in the larger sense — appear as the material world. It is believed that the fifteen electrical attributes, the five grosser extensions, along with mind, intelligence, feeling and ego constitute the *twenty-four principles* underlying all manifestation, as mentioned in occult literature and *The Revelation of St. John:* "And around about the throne (central seat of power) were four and twenty seats; and upon the seats I saw four and twenty Elders."

Mystics understand these principles to complete the full manifestation of the worlds; they are really modifications of Spirit so that the One can produce, out of Itself, all that is expressing. Therefore, all creation is but a *play of ideas* on the never-changing substance of Spirit which men refer to as God.

Between some teachers there is disagreement; some declare creation to be *unreal* and to others it is *Spirit in form.* Enlightened souls know Spirit to be *unconditioned* and, at the same time, a *portion* of It is *manifesting* as the worlds. These opposing views have given rise to two schools of thought. One says the goal of the soul which is bound up in delusion is to *see through* the matter and cease to have any cognition of, or relationship to, creation. The other teaches the ideal of our learning to clearly comprehend the nature of the worlds and live freely in them. It seems to me the problem must be resolved within the mind of the individual according to his personal destiny, natural inclination and ability to succeed on the path of his choice.

All of our vehicles are *sealed* at key places and energies flow to the physical body from the more subtle ones, with the soul as the seat of power for the individual. In the average person the greater awareness is of the

physical vehicle only and the workings of subtle energies are not consciously recognized. In yogic literature we find a description of nerves (on the physical level) and *tubes* or *channels* through which life-force flows (on the astral level.) The most important channel is considered to be that one which runs through the central spinal passageway and is referred to, in Sanskrit, as *sushumna;* though one need not become a Sanskrit scholar in order to succeed on the spiritual path. Along either side of this central channel are two other passageways; *ida* and *pingala* or simply the right and left channels through which energy moves. These latter conduits intersect along the spine at the nerve ganglions and merge in the head at the area known as the *third eye.*

As man breathes the force of breath changes, from time to time, during the day depending upon which channel, left or right, the energies are flowing through most powerfully. Current influencing the right nostril is masculine, electrical, hot to perception and is referred to as the *sun breath.* Current influencing the left nostril is feminine, magnetic, cool to perception and is referred to as the *moon breath.* One of the goals of *Kundalini Yoga* is for a person to regulate the movements of the energies through the three main channels. When alternating currents are neutralized and the current flows through the central channel then one is no longer tied to body or mind and can experience superconscious perceptions. There are certain methods by which one can gain conscious control of these energies.

To continue; the general opinion is that the *moon breath* affects the sympathetic nervous system and represents the movement of the feminine principle in the body; known as *shakti.* This feeds and regulates body functions and is the source of dreams, desire, deep wisdom, fantasy and the *secret power* said to be possessed by women. The *sun breath* affects the vasomotor system, is the source of action, violence, body heat, lust

and a strong goal-oriented mentality. Current flowing through the central channel (when air moves through both nostrils at the same time or when breathing is suspended during meditation) enables one to control his destiny, gain power over death and transcend *maya.*

The word *chakra* is a Sanskrit term for wheel, because some see the chakras during meditation as round centers of force. Each chakra is a receptacle through which energy is distributed for various purposes, therefore, the colors will vary from chakra to chakra. Starting at the bottom of the spine we find the coccygeal plexus or *earth chakra.* Then, in order: the *water chakra* at the sacral plexus; the *fire chakra* at the lumbar plexus; the *air chakra* at the dorsal plexus; the *ether chakra* at the cervical plexus. In the head, in the space (above and behind) between the eyebrows, the *third eye* center and in (and above) the cerebrum, the *thousand petalled lotus* or crown chakra.

There is little point in trying to identify the *third eye* with the pineal gland although much can be said of its relationship with the medulla oblongota. It is when the attention and energy passes through the medulla, on the way to the crown chakra, that the lights relating to the *third eye* are seen. We can define the *third eye* as the eye of intuition for when we have temporarily withdrawn our identification from the body and workings of the mind we find that our natural intuitive ability, the ability of the soul to know by direct perception, can easily be used. While *third eye* perception can be stimulated by the touch of the guru and as a result of deep meditation and *an ability to adjust the attitude and manner of looking,* through the use of a prescribed technique we can discount the gross methods claimed by irresponsible writers as being the suggestions of unenlightened minds.

The chakras are really of a subtle nature and relate to the physical body only at the various nerve ganglion and there is an interaction between them and some of the

glands of the body. Subtle energies flow to the body through the chakras. For instance, the crown chakra is not literally the upper cerebrum of the brain but extends beyond the skull; as portrayed in some paintings and sculptures of Indian and Tibetan saints which are shown with the crown chakra, *sahasrara,* protruding above the surface of the head. Some have felt, when this center was cognized, as though a *passageway* existed here enabling the person to have access to higher levels of consciousness. It is to this center that yogis draw their vital forces at the time of conscious exit from the body. Accomplished practitioners of this art do not actually *leave* and move through time and space; they rise above all identification with form and experience the *great oneness* or, *mahasamadhi.*

The major portion of *Kundalini: consciousness-energy at rest,* in the body of the average man is inactive. Some of it moves and enables the vehicles to be animated. The average person is concerned with creature comforts and his experience in this world. His attention flows outward into involvement with externals. *Kundalini* is not awakened in the average person. The greater portion remains inactive in the lower chakras. When it begins to awaken one can feel a surge or warmth as energy flows upward through the spinal nerves.

As the current ascends, untapped powers identified with the higher chakras then emerge. This is why all yoga teachers stress the importance that a student on the spiritual path have a guru who can correctly read the disciple's psychological condition. An undisciplined person would not know how to evaluate the results of increased inner activity. When working through the lower chakras *Kundalini* brings increased energy and vitality, glowing health, enjoyment of life and even stimulates mind and imagination so that perceptions are sharper. If one is balanced, mentally and emotionally, the effects are all positive. If one is not in balance then, sometimes, disturbing effects are noted. A healthy-minded person who

meditates and remains inwardly aware of his true nature and who lets the inner activity work as it will need have nothing to fear from the awakening of *Kundalini.*

Kundalini is referred to as *shakti; female, magnetic* and *lunar.* The opposite polarity, at the crown chakra, is referred to as *shiva; male, electric* and *solar.* When *Kundalini* is aroused and, over a period of time, ascends to the crown chakra the *mystic marriage* is consumated. Just as *proper* sexual union between a man and a woman results in fulfillment and completion because masculine and feminine energies blend and neutralize, so a mystic experiences fulfillment and completion within. In this manner he is, ever after, self-contained and is not attracted to externals.

Mild evidence of the stirring of *Kundalini* in an aspirant can be; warmth, a surge of electric power in the spine, light perspiration and a feeling of coolness of the body during meditation, trembling of the body during meditation, a tendency to yawn, excessive flow of saliva in the mouth, seeming pressure on various parts of the body and, sometimes, an increase of the sexual urge. Stronger evidence of the stirring of *Kundalini* can be; a powerful surge of blissful energy up through the spine, the manifestation of inner lights, the hearing of *aum,* expansion of awareness (beyond the confines of the body), the natural cessation of thought processes and ease and contentment during prolonged meditation practice.

Over the years students may have been informed, as a result of their reading, of the dangers which lie in wait for one who awakens *Kundalini* prematurely. The two main fears seem to be that increased activity of energy through the lower chakras will create an insatiable sexual urge or that increased flow of currents through the system will add to mental confusion and cause emotional instability.

As to whether or not one who awakens this, heretofore, dormant energy will experience an increase in sexual

desire depends upon the person. Some will note this to be true and will be able to handle the matter appropriately; either by learning to express more fully and completely with the husband or wife or; if this is not desired or not possible the energy can be directed into the upper chakras and the emphasis placed on creative work and meditation. Total aliveness is a characteristic of one who is truly awakened. We can do what we will with the energy at our disposal.

As to the possibility of psychological disturbance; a person who is not mentally and emotionally stable has no business working with subtle forces anyway. This is why, in the *Yoga Sutras of Patanjali,* the first two steps leading to meditation practice are concerned with attitude, behavior and, in general, living in harmony with the environment. One who has serious psychological problems should not try to find a cure through meditation or by working with subtle forces. Many who are not yet *ripe* for spiritual awakening dabble on the fringes of the occult sciences and become mediums, sorcerers and *pseudo-spiritual leaders.* One who is looking for thrills, phenomena, power over others or magical abilities is not yet ready for this path which has enlightenment as the goal.

Some *powers* may be realized but they will only be utilized by a serious truth student to clear the mind and consciousness and bring him into a greater realization of Life. Even in the East magicians, mediums, workers of *spells* and misguided users of occult power are not unknown. I have met swamis who claimed to have been trained in the *ashrams of the Himalayas* who were taken in this country, by those of superficial perception, as true spiritual leaders. Some of these men could demonstrate mastery (through auto-suggestion) over blood circulation, suspend breathing for a hour or more while entranced (not samadhi), manufacture scents through the chanting of mantras, prophesy as a result of observing

the flow of breath in their body at the time of being presented a question (a method known to some) and remain impervious to pain. Still, upon careful questioning they proved to be ignorant of the truths revealed in their own *sacred scriptures* and were lacking in genuine God-realization.

Many of these "wonder-workers" find, as do others who build a following through the display of special *gifts,* that there is always the temptation to "fake it" when they temporarily lose the power to perform. Also, the lure of money and fame causes them to prostitute their abilities and deny what principles they may have had at the beginning of their career.

One may ask, "What about Jesus and other enlightened men and women who performed miracles?" My only answer can be: when a person is self-realized he will do what he is led to do and, whatever exprssion this takes, he will neither be motivated by ego nor bound by his actions.

I teach, as prescribed by my guru, *Kriya Yoga* and other simple but result-producing methods. There is nothing mysterious about the technique of *Kriya Yoga*; similar methods have been known and taught for centuries. Its effectiveness lies in the instruction given concerning the practice; and the rite of initiation. No hard and fast rule concerning the transmission of the method can apply; some people are *ripe* for initiation almost immediately, while others should undergo a period of preparation — study, meditation and self-discipline.

Yoganandaji often gave *Kriya* initiation within a matter of days after meeting a disciple and, in other instances, he asked the disciple to wait a while. A probationary period is sometimes useful because it gives the disciple time to prepare and to anticipate the occasion of initiation. If a person comes to me and asks, "Can you show me how to practice *Kriya?* I've read a book or two on meditation and I'm interested." I have to suggest

a waiting period to be sure of his sincere interest and to give him time to properly appreciate the significance of the inner life. One must handle situations according to intuitive guidance.

Kriya Yoga is defined as; *union with the Infinite through a certain practice.* The Sanskrit root of *Kriya* is *kri,* to do, to act and react. *Kriya* practice, then, causes an effect; it does not make us *spiritual* but it can clear the mind and bring the energies in the system under control.

In our time-cycle Lahiri Mahasaya brought *Kriya Yoga* to the waiting public although instruction concerning similar methods have been preserved in books for centuries. Two verses in the *Bhagavad-Gita* (Chapter five, vs. 27,28) read as follows: "Shutting out all external objects, fixing the vision between the eyebrows, making *even* the inward and outward breaths, the sage who has controlled the senses, mind and understanding, who is intent upon liberation, who has cast away desire, fear and anger, he is ever freed."

Over the centuries mystics have learned how to rise above the workings of the mind and body during deep prayer and meditation; and to return to normal sense awareness in order to function realistically — aware of the inner and outer worlds at the same time. As *Kundalini* moves through the vehicles of man, on all levels, it purifies the passageways through which life-force flows and transforms man's bodies completely. There is a refinement of the nervous system as well as a transformation of the astral body. There is nothing strenuous about the practice of *Kriya Yoga.* The sight of scores of thousands of yoga students, many without adequate philosophical training, practicing violent breathing exercises coupled with certain physical poses in order to awaken Kundalimi, is viewed by adepts with concern.

The mere performance of exercise and technique cannot guarantee soul liberation. However, a guru can

prescribe a routine of practice for a disciple which will assist the latter in achieving self-mastery. Yoga cannot be successfully taught by one who is not skilled in the science and nothing is more unwise than for a student to learn meditation methods from a teacher and then to begin, immediately, to impart this information to others.

There are several preliminary meditation techniques which can be passed on to friends and associates to their benefit; watching the breath, looking into the light, listening to the cosmic sound (aum) and the process of inquiring into the nature of the soul with discrimination. But a meditation technique given during initiation carries with it the *force of initiation;* the method is charged with *power*. When initiation is properly conducted the initiate will experience a stirring of subtle energies on deeper levels of his being. Whether this is felt or not, just the same, something has taken place.

The guru imparts his *consciousness* and *very being* to the disciple. Master used to remark, "When I initiate you I give you my all and it is up to you to receive it." Initiation is often given with a ceremony and at this time the atmosphere is powerfully charged as a result of the proper performance of the ritual. It may be that dormant memories are awakened in the initiate and he will *recall* occasions when, in a prior embodiment, he was similarly initiated into the mysteries of Spirit.

Not all masters impart a specific method for working with *Kundalini.* Some give the impulse, the awakening of the energy, and then instruct the student to meditate and *let* happen what will happen at the right time. In this manner *Kundalini* moves from chakra to chakra according to the readiness of the disciple and brings about whatever changes are needed. No attempt is made to force the circulation of currents; things are allowed to work naturally. In due time, after some years in most instances, the chakras are activated by the ascending flow of *Kundalini* and spiritual consciousness is realized.

Once awakened, whether by personal initiation or not, this force will continue to be active. Sometimes, one becomes aware of the activity of *Kundalini* during calm moments, meditation and whenever relaxed. Over a period of years the organism will be transformed and purified. This is a little understood point; when a person is able to *bring through* this powerful force then other people, usually family members and close associates are, unknown to themselves, uplifted and benefitted. As a focal point through which *Kundalini* can express we silently bless our fellow man. Some people have, as their goal, final liberation with the idea of not returning once they leave this plane of expression. However, they and others who plan to return, can assist in the regeneration of man by living in the consciousness of Spirit on this planet.

The major levels of soul awareness are related to the seven vital places in the body of man. I will now share with you a meditation method which many have found to be extremely helpful and, if practiced with proper contemplation, it can be more than an exercise in imagination.

Sitting in your favorite meditation pose, turn within and become relaxed and inwardly centered. Then, become aware of the cerebro-spinal system. *Feel* the spine and brain from the *inside.*

Then, *concentrate* at the lower chakra while *looking* into the third eye. This center relates to the level of material awareness and the average person thus identified is sense-bound. Lights of a yellowish hue may be seen within and, in the ear, one may hear cricket-like sounds. After a while, lift the attention to the sacral center. Here, one may see, at the third eye, a white crescent-moon and the sound as of a harp. This chakra relates to the second level of soul awareness and one established here will begin to intuitively become aware of subtle forces in the body and in nature. Be absorbed in the inner work.

Next, move up to the lumbar chakra. The inner lights will be reddish in color and the sound like a

flute. This center relates to the third level of soul awareness and one established here should have an understanding of the mind and of mental patterns which underlie the forms on the astral and physical levels. Then, move up to the dorsal chakra, between the shoulder blades in the spine. The inner lights will be blue and the sounds will be bell-like; usually as of tinkling bells. This center is termed the *door to the inner worlds* as here we rise above identification with the lower levels; mental, astral and physical planes. Here our attention becomes steady and our love for meditation increases. This relates to the fourth level of soul awareness and is the beginning of the true mystical life. One who remains absorbed here can become self-realized; aware of the soul nature which is not modified by identification with external manifestations.

Lifting the attention to the cervical chakra we can remain poised in the contemplation of the riddle of *maya.* As we contemplate, trying to really *see* with intuition and discrimination the fabric of the stuff of the world; time, space, energy and light particles — we rest on the edge of manifestation. *Being successful at this level we attain mastership.* The inner lights here will be bright sparkling radiations against a dark background: Spirit and nature. The inner sound will be a combination of all of the lower sounds.

After a while we can move up *through* the medulla and *into* the third eye center. This is the sixth level of soul awareness, the level of Christ or Krishna Consciousness. At this level we know ourselves to be a wave on the ocean; Spirit individualized. Here we are above the image-forming tendency of the mind and we rest in the full realization of our bright soul nature. The sound here will be *aum* and the inner light will be, usually, gold and blue with brilliant white in the center.

Finally, we can move up into the crown chakra and even, above it, and know ourselves as *pure being.* Here we rest in the realization of unmodified consciousness.

At this level we do not do anything; we merely remain in this awareness and, as a result, there will seem to be a feed-down of light and power which will do the work needed to clear the mind, neutralize or erase karmic patterns and regenerate the vehicles of the soul.

When we are ready to come out of our meditation we can descend, chakra by chakra, to the heart center and then cognize our environment and live a natural life in the awareness of our soul nature.

On subtle levels there is much going on that the average person does not even imagine. Lights and sounds emanating from the chakras go without being perceived except as we awaken and turn our attention to them.

When I was first initiated into *Kriya Yoga* by my guru he told those assembled that in the early days, when he had only a few disciples at his classes, he would show the inner light to each of them. After the service was concluded and most of the people had left I remained, with a few brother disciples, to clear the chapel of extra chairs. Master sat at the front of the chapel and talked with us. I asked him to show me the inner light.

My guru asked me to come closer, then placed his hands on my forehead. "Concentrate at the spiritual eye," he said, "and look into the distance." I concentrated and looked. Looking "into the distance" was for the purpose of helping my inward gaze to become steady. I saw bright flashing lights against a dark background. Two half-moons appeared and began to move together. Then, just before they *became one* my mind wandered and, again, I was presented with a dazzling display of scattered lights. At that moment Master removed his hands and said, "You are seeing Spirit and nature, Krishna and Radha. Next time don't try so hard."

After a moment he placed his hands on my head again. The inner perception was similar to the one before but, as I reached the point where the two lights began to merge Master said, "Now, look into the distance." I did

and a large "silvery-moon" appeared and held steady. What interested me was that I did not describe my inner perceptions. Master did not suggest what to see but he *knew* what I was seeing as I saw it and was able to tell me what to do in order to see the inner light. By looking into his spiritual eye Master could attune himself to another person's thought processes and inner perceptions and give precise instruction as needed.

It is not really necessary for one on the path to become overly fascinated by the subject of *Kundalini* and the workings of the chakras. As we rest more and more in the awareness of our true nature whatever physiological and psychic processes which must be reorganized will automatically take place. The practice of the *presence,* meditation and remembrance of the soul nature will assure any serious person of success on the spiritual path.

Chapter Ten

SEX AND THE SPIRITUAL LIFE

We are all enacting the drama of life because, as male or female, we interact with our opposite polarity; just as God, on a cosmic scale, expresses through the interaction of polar opposites. Poets, mystics and spiritual teachers have written of the power and glory of the male-female relationship and, in our deepest center of feeling and knowing, we all respond to this subtle mystery.

In the opening verses of the Old Testament we read: "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." In the beginning Universal Intelligence *willed* to express; positive and negative poles were established and the whole electrical manifestation came into being. When souls were individualized they were polarized; positive — male and negative — female. This story is reflected in every major scripture of the world because it is a basic and universal truth. And since opposites are forever moving in the direction of completion and balance it is natural for male and female, men and women, to be drawn together to fulfill the purpose of life on earth.

In spite of this most natural of happenings — because of improper or insufficient education — people are often confused, disturbed and guilt-ridden concerning their basic sexuality and their relationships with others. Wide-spread ignorance on the subject of sex is due partly to the fact

that the subject has been shrouded in mystery and dark silence; the effect has been to distort the minds of otherwise healthy-minded people, young and old, in all walks of life.

One of the results of our refusal to accept the sexual nature of man has been the stimulation of curiosity; much to the consternation of *proper* (but often repressed) citizens, lawmakers and serious educators. We find articles in the popular press and watch discussions presented on television purporting to prove that progress has been made in the matter of sex education. Usually the subject is handled delicately and with such an obvious effort to be in good taste that the overtones of guilt and the sense of embarrassment still come through. One researcher, during a recent television interview, went to the opposite extreme and stated that the sexual function was as natural as eating, breathing or going to the bathroom. My impression of his views is that he is purely mechanistic in his attitude and has overlooked the deeper importance and function of sex in a person's life.

Even in the most enlightened circles educators are not quite sure how to approach the subject of sex. Most young people are receptive to a natural common-sense explanation but sometimes it is the parents who are afraid of the possibility that sons or daughters may learn too much to soon. Many adults enjoy the sexual relationship but hold to the feeling that young people should know little or, nothing, about sexual matters until marriage. The young are supposed to know about sex but not do anything about it until they are older.

Our divorce courts are filled with sorrowful and resentful men and women who married; too soon, unwisely, or have not been able to fully appreciate the marvelous possibilities inherent in their relationship. Magazine racks are heavy-laden with sex-oriented publications which are, for the most part, designed to intrigue and fascinate. Some of these offerings are written with the pretense

of being helpful and informative. Most, however, cater to the curious, the ill-informed and to those who seek vicarious pleasure. Films are blatant in their presentation of sex; crude, bizarre themes and scenes, predominate.

Youthful defiance of adult narrow-mindedness is evident in promiscuous behavior, sleeping around, communal relationships and in early but *impossible* marriages. Homes which are assumed, by friends and acquaintances, to be havens of connubial bliss are often, in fact, riddled with friction and discord. One survey revealed that fifty-three percent of the people questioned said they were happily married. *Just over half of all who were interviewed.*

To be sure, there are many men and women, married and unmarried, who quietly go their way; satisfied, adjusted and possessed of a rational understanding of their sexuality and its place in their lives. The sexual urge, in one form or another, is one of the most powerful of all urges with which we have to contend. No healthy person is exempt from it. It is nature's way of fulfilling herself and of continuing the species. Rightly understood and properly directed this force can result in great joy and accomplishment. Misunderstanding and improper use of it can result in unhappiness and illness.

Over the past several years, in counseling many thousands of people, I have found that fully sixty-percent admitted to inner conflict in matters of sex and in their relationship with members of the opposite sex. The problems are common enough; guilt, resentment, inadequate response, lack of opportunity for fulfillment or lack of self-discipline. Also, there is, frequently; the matter of improper mating, lack of harmony with the proper mate, fear of being homosexual — as well as other fears which are not always clearly defined. Sometimes the problem is insufficent education. often, even when one is informed, the intellectual knowledge cannot cancel out emotional feelings.

People should know that sex has a spiritual basis. Life is expressing through all of us. We see in the radiance and healthful glow of people *in love* something good and altogether beautiful; even sacred. Loving people are healthy, their step elastic, their eyes bright, their magnetism contagious. It is common knowledge that "all the world loves a lover." When we see this force in full bloom we respond because we know it to be right and beautiful. All people who have accomplished anything worthwhile have been highly charged sexually: with imagination, energy, vision, persistence and purpose. Inner drive is a blessing, not a curse, but it has to be properly channeled. Vital force is conveyed to others through the eyes, handshake, tone of voice, the bearing of the body and even through the written word. Poets, artists, inventive geniuses, spiritual leaders, heads of great business enterprises — are all possessed of a powerful, vital nature. History bears this out. Without the pulsing of life-force through the body there is no momentum or even any great interest in the things of the world.

Every man of accomplishment has had the right woman in his life to reinforce his nature and balance his energies. A man is not complete without his feminine counterpart and the reverse is also true. Even spiritual leaders who do not marry have their close female companions; consorts, disciples, friends or confidants. The sexual relationship does not always find expression on the physical level. Because of the subtle interchange of vital forces between people there can be a blending and a fulfilling between two people who are enjoying each other's company and who are in mental and emotional rapport.

Unfortunately, in the minds of countless people on the spiritual path there is the thought that sexual union is contrary to living the divine life and is, at best, a concession to human nature. In the Adam and Eve story, in the minds of many, there is the *implied* belief that sexual intercourse was the cause of the fall of man. This

misconception is elaborated upon by many contemporary truth teachers who should know better. (Or, who do know better but continue to teach the *fiction,* either to satisfy students who are sexually repressed and who, therefore, feel superior and exalted because of their lack of *need,* or to *reinforce* this belief in the minds of students who are being taught that celibacy is necessary for spititual attainment.)

Here is the truth about the fall of man. Certain souls, conscious of their divine nature, because of allowing their feelings to dominate reason, became involved with the material worlds and lost their intuitive ability. Over identification with externals causes man to forget his true condition; then guilt, shame and general inner confusion results. Unfortunately, it has been the practice in our western culture to refer to young people who have not yet had sexual experience as being pure or innocent; a direct implication that sexual knowledge and experience makes one impure. Normal, healthy people, wonder, "How can such a beautiful and enriching experience be impure?" Yet, there lingers in the subconscious the false teaching of the ages — producing psychological complications and much human misery.

To my knowledge, speaking as I do as one who once lived as a monk, *to the letter of the rule,* and now as a contented married man, I can find no evidence that lack of natural sexual experience in any way enhances spiritual awareness. I have known a few men who were celibate by choice and who were healthy-minded and successful in their ventures. They chose to direct all of their time and energy into their creative work and thus were able to transmute and redirect sexual energy for other purposes. They were not devoid of a natural sex urge by any means. Through will power and intense concentration they sublimated the urge. In every instance, however, these men did have close non-physical relationships with women (or a woman) who shared their dreams.

A disciple of Yoganandaji's, while trying to explain his own strong attraction for the lady of his choice, implied that Master could not really understand or, relate to the situation since Master was a monk, he did not have a strong sexual drive. My guru set the young man straight on the matter by confiding: "I have as strong an urge as any other man — the only difference between you and me is that I meditate and draw the energy up into the higher centers and then use it for creative work."

The male-female relationship is of vital importance even if the physical closeness is absent because there is an electrical interchange which takes place when understanding people share their lives. A physical relationship is not always possible or, desired. Mere proximity is sufficient to allow positive and negative energies to co-mingle; this results in balance and fulfillment. Such a relationship *softens* a man's nature and gives *confidence* and *support* to the woman.

During my years with Yoganandaji I observed my brother monks, as well as my sisters. Some had come into the Order after having spent several years "in the world." Others, like myself, came at an early age, propelled by the desire to know God without having gone through the experience of marriage, family and social interaction. For some, the monastic life is ideal; and others find it restricting and frustrating. For those who can adapt, the monastic community offers freedom in an ideal atmosphere, for study, meditation and wholehearted attention on the path. Of course, there are those who enter such a way of life with high resolve only to find, later, that they are not suited for it. Some find such a community to be a haven from the harsh world with which they do not want to cope; their's is a negative reason for remaining and, after a time, their escapist attitude results in inner conflict.

Brahmacharya, so often wrongly defined as celibacy, is correctly defined as *teacher of God.* Loosely defined

it means *he who studies the mysteries of God.* Inherent in the definition is the suggestion that one who is intent upon examining the *mysteries* will tend to direct all thoughts, energy and effort to his studies. The sages have taught that man should make wise use of his energies. Suppression is not advised nor is excess in any direction. Common sense, orderly living and natural function are to be desired. While Yoganandaji stressed celibacy for those in the monastic community, for students and disciples who were married or who planned to marry, his counsel was more practical. To some he explained the yogic method of sexual union.

There is the *Tantric* tradition of yoga wherein the way to self-realization through proper understanding and natural relationships with forces in nature is set forth. This tradition takes in all of the various yoga systems and declares the universe and everything it to be permeated by an energy or power, emanating from a single source of all being. This power manifests as static inertia, dynamic inertia (mental energy) and as the harmonious union of these *reacting opposites.* The student of the *Tantric* discipline tries to identify the corresponding psychic centers of his own body with those of the universe; seeking full realization of God not only as Absolute and beyond relative things but also *as* all manifestations.

The *Tantras* (Tantric scriptures) set forth the idea that the female embodies the subtle fundamental forces which control and regulate the universe. This means she is *shakti.* Her polar opposite is *shakta.* Instead of suggesting the celibate life as necessary for all on the spiritual path the *Tantras* teach the importance of *natural* union between a man and a woman. In one mistitled but, otherwise, informative book on the subject of *Tantra Yoga* this yoga is referred to as the "yoga of sex." Sex may well be what it is all about, taking into consideration the energy interactions of the cosmos — but the average reader is liable to assume, from the title, that the

human sexual relationship is the whole theme of the *Tantric* tradition.

But, for now, let us get on with the teaching as it *does* relate to human interaction. Power, it is taught, is generated when the magnetic fields of a man and a woman mingle. When two people are properly mated the result is true union and a powerful radiation flows through them. Psychic currents pass from one to the other on the physical, astral and mental levels. This results, not in mere physical release, but in complete blending.

Understanding the interchange which takes place during the occasion of ideal sexual union we can readily see why indiscriminate sexual encounters might well be destructive to the mental and emotional natures of the parties involved. We tend to absorb into our psychological make-up the tendencies and characteristics of those with whom we have intimate relationships. As we understand what really happens during sacred male-female communion we can see how it is impossible for any other form of sexual experimentation to be truly fulfilling. Masturbation, for instance cannot result in fulfillment and inward balance. A homosexual relationship, while perhaps considered to be *legal* or *normal* by some, is not *natural.* There cannot be balance and completion because the conditions for it do not exist.

The ideal, according to this philosophy, is soul-rapport; then the spontanous follow-through will be right and natural. Aside from normal and desirable foreplay there will be no mental or emotional conflict or any attempt or desire on the part of either mate to use or be used. When a man and a woman who are in love, live together, their sexual union *just happens.* Most women know, naturally, what some men have yet to find out; that warmth, closeness and tender regard is an important ingredient in a fulfilled relationship. A prolonged, gentle but spontanous, sexual union is far more satisfying than a routine, "let's get it over with" situation. Why not have the total experience?

The small dinner, soft lights, wine and flowers? Then let things happen in due course.

Some people are not concerned with sexual matters. This is their nature; though we cannot label it other than a personal preference. In a marriage there are some men who are shy and fearful, perhaps with latent homosexual tendencies, who are reluctant to enter completely into a natural human relationship. There are women, also, with reservations and fears. We also have couples who are not suited for each other but, for reasons of their own, they continue to pretend, "do their duty," accept the situation and, in general, prostitute themselves. There are those who use as an "out" the excuse that sexual union is "unspiritual." It is amazing how many such people suddenly affirm the enriching spiritual effects of a true love relationship once they have the opportunity to experience it.

All marriages are not made in heaven. A heaven-made marriage is the result of two people, attuned on the soul level, coming together. A couple may be married in the eyes of the state but if there is not a real attunement there is no real union. The majority marry because it is the thing to do. They do not ask much of life; only that their material needs are assured and their emotional and physical needs are met. On the other end of the spectrum are the men and women who "think for themselves" and who make their own rules. Because they are free of the restricting bonds of tradition they have the attitude that they can take life as it comes and all will be well. Yet, among these "free" people deep-seated patterns of guilt concerning sexual behavior often eat away at the conscience; resulting in self-condemnation, excessive drinking, reckless living and other self-destructive activities. Many who live on the surface of things find, during their introspective moments, that they do not like themselves and somehow feel *untrue* to life.

Too often, young people, as well as others along in

years, marry for the wrong reasons. Caught up in the rushing tide of emotion, their discrimination is temporarily cancelled out. Too late — they awaken and find themselves involved in a relationship which should not have been. Sometimes, it is then that one should make the decision to undo the damage and start anew; again, it may be that adjustment and an honest attempt to bring matters into a harmonious balance is the key. Bitterness, frustration, resentment, despair and sickness can be the results of mis-mating and it is a spiritual crime to continue such a relationship.

We are not *silly and romantic* to *dream* of being properly mated for this is a dream that can come true if we will believe in it and plan intelligently. The secret is to *attract* the right person as a mate. A woman should not marry to *legalize* an unwise sexual relationship, "make a good financial catch," keep up with her peers, get away from home or to have children. I have discussed such mistakes with many women; they married for the wrong reason only to find, to their dismay, when the *right* man came along they were tied to the *wrong* one. Men also make the above errors in judgment.

It is natural for a man to desire the companionship and loving attention of the woman for whom he is destined and it is natural for a woman to desire the companionship, protection and love of *her* man. True happiness between a man and a woman is not just a story-teller's fantasy; it is real and attainable. But, like most situations which are worthwhile in life, we have to *believe, expect* and *make ourselves ready* for the occasion and refuse to accept any substitutes. People who unwittingly accept a less than ideal relationship either settle down and make the best of it or they become cynical and embittered. Life, it seems, has conspired to cheat them; but, perhaps, they did not know any better or they subconsciously contrived to cheat themselves. Then of course, (and their numbers are legion) there are those who *know* better but do not *do* better.

They get involved because of guilt or lack of self-esteem, or put up with their situation in order to punish themselves. Sometimes they punish their partner and the children.

Women are more frequently the ones to first become disillusioned with marriage. Having led a sheltered life before marrying or because of harboring unrealistic (or realistic but unattainable — they feel) dreams of domestic bliss, they become discouraged. With the passage of time and the appeasement of passion, in some instances, the husband's attentiveness decreases. His attention is taken up with the responsibility of family needs. Or, having acquired a permanent and satisfactory (to him) bedmate, he takes his wife for granted and overlooks the little (but important) overtures so evident during courtship days. Sometimes the wife's attitude is the problem; she may be immature, expect too much attention or fail to provide the encouragement her husband needs. She may nag and complain instead of being loving and inspiring and she may even make the mistake of using sex as a weapon, trying to control her husband either by giving or withholding her affection, as reward or punishment. In my opinion any man who puts up with this kind of treatment deserves it.

The sexual relationship is what marriage is all about. I am not referring to physical union only, but to the complete interchange of mental and emotional currents between husband and wife. When this interchange is free-flowing there is no temporary misunderstanding which cannot be solved. Two loving people can successfully meet any challenge.

There may be many excuses for an unhappy marriage; lack of money, conflict of religious beliefs, differences of opinion regarding vocation, interference by in-laws, lack of understanding in matters of sexual relations or small-mindedness which comes through as "nit-picking" and trivial nonsense.

True mating is a sublime, beautiful and spiritually enriching relationship. Among the billions of souls in the universe, all are seeking fulfillment and a *specific two,* male and female, are destined to meet. Think of the wonder of it! Almost any two agreeable people can "make love." They can act out the ritual, they can pretend. But, this is not love; a sharing, blending and a true union. This is but a hollow mockery of the real thing, a selfish grasping after the crumbs of life. Why should any person have to be caught up in such behavior when the cosmic plan is so devised that the *real* relationship is possible?

The question comes: "How should a person who is not married go about seeking the proper mate?" Strange as it may seem; the first step is not to go out looking but to *prepare* for the experience. We do this by meditation to *become self-complete within ourselves.* In this way we make ourselves *magnetic* and *attractive.* Then, when we are thus magnetized, we draw the person and the experiences we need to fulfill our life. Many may be drawn but, with the right use of reason and intuition, we will be able to select the one with whom we will be compatible.

What about the *one true love* which continues incarnation after incarnation? I am enough of a philosophical romanticist to *want* to believe in such a relationship. If two people have a real rapport why should they not continue their intimate relationship on this and other levels? I cannot accept the sometimes presented theory that, in the beginning, when souls were sent forth, they were split into equal halves and are thus destined to rejoin. My thought is that we are each self-complete as individualizations of Spirit and we are either *positive* or *negative* as far as our polarity is concerned and when a male and female meet early on the path and they have a true rapport they *agree,* because of mutual feeling and similar destinies, to work out their respective ex-

periences together; they then become soul mates. Their lives flow together, incarnation after incarnation (and between incarnations) so that they meet time and time again. When soul mates meet and share, their's is a special relationship. Here we refer to a blending of male-female attributes which, in time, will transcend all dualities and will, eventually, culminate in cosmic unity.

Sometimes divorce is the logical step to take once two people agree they can no longer live together in harmony; each then has, hopefully, the opportunity to find the right marriage partner with whom to share the kind of life they deserve. There are often cultural and religious objections to divorce but these can be met satisfactorily by people with reasonable intelligence.

When a couple live together without the strong unifying existence of true love, the inner drive for fulfillment often may tempt one, or both, parties involved to seek satisfaction outside of marriage. Not a fully rewarding alternate because a liason is often accompanied by feelings of guilt and the times of togetherness cannot always be conveniently arranged.

Women are especially prone to psychosomatic illnesses if they are not properly mated or if the love relationship is not total. If the marriage is basically a good one but, for some reason or another, the female harbors feelings of resentment or guilt relative to sexual relations with her husband the subconscious discord can reflect as mild problems to begin with; then more obvious clues such as severe headaches, lack of resistance to colds, tumors of the breast and uterus and even cancer. I know of many women who have successfully overcome medically diagnosed ailments through the direct approach of coming to terms with their husband and the marriage relationship.

Some women can, if they accept their sexuality as natural, enjoy intercourse with their husband even if deep love is not present. They can take what has been

assumed as the man's point of view; physical intimacy can be shared between two who are compatible even if deep soul communion is absent. There are men and women who love their respective mates but who, because of guilt concerning the sexual function, are inhibited. If true love exists any and all problems can be solved if the couple will relax, share openly and try to satisfy each other's need for affection. Men should realize that with most women the sexual relationship is more emotional and deeply rooted in the female nature and it is important that the wife be made to feel loved and needed as a total being and not just in the bedroom.

While the male may be dominant and aggressive by nature it is not unmanly for him to be gentle and considerate. Marriage is perhaps the most intimate of all human relationships and takes constant attention if the couples are to be happy and fulfilled. If the husband will treat his wife with respect, provide for her needs and allow her to be an individual with creative interests, she will feel secure and loved. A wife should encourage her husband; never criticize, scold, condemn or try to dominate the relationship. Ideally, the wife should see her husband as a manifestation of the Divine and the husband should see his wife in the same light. Then *shakta,* male-electric and *shakti,* female-magnetic are mutually interdependent and balanced.

It is often the little things that mar an otherwise good marriage relationship; possessiveness, inability to play the proper role, or an immature attitude concerning responsibilities. Both partners need time alone and time to study, reflect and investigate areas of personal interest. Words from *The Prophet* come to mind: "Love one another, but make not a bond of love; let it be a moving sea between the shores of your souls."

There may be other matters which cause concern; matters upon which little light has been thrown in our culture. The majority of married people in industrial

societies are aware of the need to plan the family and regulate or prevent pregnancy. I see no reason why the martial relationship should be marred by the fear of unwanted pregnancy nor do I see any reason for parents to bring children into the world if the children cannot be adequately provided for. There is also the question of abortion. I agree with other teachers who assert that responsibility to avoid conception should be taken by couples who do not want children to result from their union. My view is that we should make a greater effort to stress preventive steps rather than liberalize the practice of abortion. There is a deeper issue here than that which is usually discussed.

No one will argue the wisdom of therapeutic abortion; undergone for the purpose of saving a pregnant woman's life or sanity. This should be accomplished as soon after conception as possible. If the gestation period is well under way and the mother-to-be is healthy, even if unmarried, I feel it best to allow nature to take its course. The trauma experienced by the soul whose entry into this world is thwarted is one thing to consider; another is the possible guilt and inner conflict the woman may have after the operation — guilt and conflict which may take its toll later in life as psychosomatic illness. To make abortion easy and consider it lightly also tends to dull a person's sensitivities and makes him disrespectful of life.

Spiritual teachers explain, from their point of view, that a soul begins its journey into this world at the time of conception and becomes increasingly identified with this plane as the fetus develops. Therefore, proponents of the liberal view concerning abortion may also want to consider the fact that they are perhaps meddling with more than surface matters. If a woman has miscarried or aborted she can then, for her own peace of mind, make sure she has taken a philosophical view of the experience and has not retained any subconscious conflicts.

Those who have researched the matter claim that one man out of every six is either an overt or latent homosexual. Statistics are also available on this subject concerning women who are similarly inclined. There are even clubs, organizations, churches, publications and films; every effort being made by some to legalize, obtain recognition for, and bring homosexual's into their place in society. This seems to me to be as unreasonable an effort as it would be to demand status and recognition for any other group of people who were victims of common emotional disorders.

There are many unfounded explanations for homosexual behavior. A popular theory, among many in the occult field, is that homosexuals are a superior type, having balanced male and female natures within themselves. There is also the theory that a male homosexual played a female role in the immediate past incarnation and did not make the mental and emotional change-over when coming into a male body this time; and vice-versa for the female homosexual. I cannot accept this theory since I feel we are either male or female from the beginning and we play our prime role incarnation after incarnation.

In almost every instance, as we examine the background of a male homosexual, we find a common pattern. Either there was no father to complete the family unit or the father was not dominant so that the young male child did not have the model after which to unconsciously pattern himself. Or, the mother may have been over protective, the result being that the female characteristics were *imprinted* upon the growing boy's subconscious. Many male homosexuals will, when questioned, admit to a love-hate attitude toward the mother. The mother of a male homosexual is frequently unconsciously (and often consciously) in love with her son and is often happy when the son does not marry. In this way the mother does not have to share her boy. She feels that no girl is worthy of her son.

There can be other contributing factors. A young man, not able to comfortably fulfill his role as a male, may refuse to become involved with a female on an intimate basis; he does not want to be rejected, hurt or used. He may not want to be unfaithful to his mother. Or, he may not want the responsibility of children. Perhaps he cannot successfully compete with other males. For a male homosexual to change he must neutralize his mother's *imprinting* on the subconscious level, stop justifying his condition and try to enter into a meaningful relationship with a member of the opposite sex. He does not have to blame his mother or reject her; only come to terms with the relationship and learn to stand on his own. Naturally he should, for the most part, give up any identification with individuals and groups who defend their homosexual inclinations.

To be fair to mothers we must say that some males become homosexuals even if they have had an ideal early home environment; a boy who refuses to mature completely may also be inclined toward homosexuality. For females with a homosexual conditioning the problem can be resolved if they will neutralize the subconscious imprinting of the father, assume the female role (and responsibility) and begin to keep the company of a healthy-minded and considerate male.

While a homosexual's problem may be more obvious than problems of others, most unenlightened people have some problems with which to deal. Therefore, we should never condemn others, no matter what problem is visible or beneath the surface. We should see all people as souls and in our dealings with them, in the course of daily transactions and inter-relationships, look through temporary psychological problems. Our task, as students on the on the path, is to work with the *real* and *permanent* and not become overly concerned with that which will, in time, change.

We have been discussing, for the most part, the marriage

relationship. However, there are many men and women who are either not married or who have no plans to marry. Single men and women are usually happier if they have the opportunity to share thoughts and interests with members of the opposite sex. Intimacy is not necessary for the flow of energies to pass between compatible men and women. It is usually better for single people to live alone than to share living quarters with a member of the same sex. The free time can then be given to study, meditation and creative activities. To share an apartment or house with a member of the same sex for the sake of companionship (except in instances where older people desire this for reasons of security) may build a dependance and result in the people involved failing to become self-reliant.

A single person who does not have immediate plans for marriage or an opportunity for sexual relations can lessen the sex urge by remaining busy, creative and in a meditative mood. Also, by avoiding sexually stimulating books, movies and discussions and by refusing to be preoccupied with the subject of sex. Diet can help, also. A balanced diet, but in moderation, of natural foods devoid of stimulants. If night is the most difficult time as far as the need to control or regulate thoughts and feelings then one can meditate and, prior to going to bed, bathe the body openings with cool water. This will send the energies away from the senses and turn them inward; then one can direct the attention to the heart chakra or the third eye while going to sleep.

One should not make the mistake of believing that abstinence will accelerate spiritual unfoldment. There is more to this matter of living the spiritual life than just denying one of the natural urges. People with an affectionate nature and a natural sex drive should be married, to the right person, and be properly mated and totally fulfilled. Marriage need not stand in the way of our making progress on the path. The desire for union which

is common to us all is not contrary to the divine plan. It is the passionate pursuit unchecked by reason or intuition, which brings suffering in its wake. Blinded by strong feelings or motivated by negative psychological conditionings many people make mistakes and injure others. Natural fulfillment, experienced as a result of wise and sensible selection, brings great happiness. It is wisdom for us to seek soul-realization and to live in harmony with nature.

Chapter Eleven

OBSERVATIONS OF A TRUTH TEACHER

My outer ministry has always reflected my inner attitudes, degree of soul awareness and ability to move intuitively in harmony with subtle currents relative to my personal destiny. Over the years there have been challenges and there have been unexpected opportunities. I have found it helpful to contemplate more deeply during the times of challenge and to accept without question the many opportunities.

No sooner had I left the Self-Realization Fellowship than I received my annual draft notice. As a clergyman I had been exempt from military service. Rather than wait, I volunteered for induction and, after a few months of training, was assigned to my duties as a medical technician. During my two year tour of duty I served at base hospitals at Fort Knox, Fort Hood, Fort Sam Houston and Fort Riley.

While at the last base I took a weekend leave and visited Kansas City as well as the Unity School of Practical Christianity near Lee's Summit, Missouri. I had known of

the global ministry of Unity and had read a few of their publications so I was happy to be able to visit their international headquarters. There I met Richard Lynch, Lowell Fillmore and others and toured the extensive grounds. What impressed me most, outside of the quiet spirit of dedication of the people there, was my visit to the vast printing plant which produces millions of pieces of literature a year. Little did I suspect during the first visit that fifteen years later I would speak during a Sunday service at Unity Village to a congregation of over seven hundred people or that I would be speaking for many Unity churches in the major cities, as I now do frequently.

Charles and Myrtle Fillmore founded Unity before the turn of the century and saw their ministry grow from a Kansas City congregation to a following of millions all over the world— and all as a result of faith in God and the practical message they were inspired to impart.

Upon receiving my discharge from the Army I settled in Denver, Colorado to begin my independent work. I would have preferred to work in cooperation with Master's organization but this was not possible since I had been a monk of the Order and left. I taught weekly classes, lectured in rented halls and gained invaluable experience. I had big plans to establish a world-wide movement but it did not take long before I learned that plans are one thing; the *consciousness* to back up good ideas is something else!

With youthful enthusiasm I wrote letters to several independent spiritual leaders, informing them of my projects and plans and enlisting their cooperation. Most responded in general terms and wished me well — though none offered to cooperate. Of course, I should have realized that they had their own projects and responsibilities. One who wrote more than a routine "lot's of luck" letter was Father Divine of Philidelphia. He sent a two page letter in which he gave me practical advice. "If I were you," he wrote. "I would get a job and save

my money and then begin to finance my ministry in that way. If your plans are of God they will go forward!"

Years later, in 1958, I visited Philadelphia to lecture and on a Saturday afternoon, visited Father Divine's headquarters at a downtown location. The dining hall was packed and I was given a seat just a few feet from where Father Divine sat. The magnetism, love and spiritual radiance of this man cannot be conveyed in words. Here was *power* and a *presence* and *quite self-assurance.* Here was a soul who knew who he was!

Widely misunderstood for years, Father Divine never altered his plans or changed his conviction. Instead, he worked with the masses, encouraging them to lift themselves up and to live the true spiritual life to the fullest. He set the example. Here are a few of his words as recorded by Walter C. Lanyon in Walter's book, *The Eyes of the Blind.* (The title was inspired by the words, "Then shall the eyes of the blind be opened.") I quote: "If you, the followers of Christ, will walk worthy of your vocation wherewith you are called, you will behold the Life of Christ as brought into expression by Jesus. You will see this power through every avenue of life and through every adverse and undesirable condition or appearance, whatsoever it may be. It will be your guide, your savior, your protection. It is indeed wonderful! Facts and figures too stout to be denied are established regarding the Truth that 'the Spirit, of the Consciousness of the Presence of God is the Source of all Supply and will satisfy every good desire — .' "

And, again: "If you are subject to the Spirit of Light, then you are instantly released from the evils of the shadow world—of the material world. By not understanding these shadows you have endowed them with power over you. Walk in the Light." Father Divine's body had been on this plane for over ninety years when he left it to continue his work without restriction. His realization was that "Spirit is operative with or without a body." Father

was one of the few people with the courage to speak, not *about,* but *from* his realization of pure Spirit.

After a year in Denver I decided to travel in order to gather experience and extend my ministry. Before leaving the city, however, I was to meet Joel S. Goldsmith. Mr. Goldsmith was in town for a few days and one of his students arranged for us to meet. It has always been my good fortune to meet the right people when I have needed fresh inspiration.

It was not so much what Joel said during our visit but what he *was*. Once a salesman and a former Christian Science Practitioner, Mr. Goldsmith eventually became an independent truth teacher. For many years he toured the world, worked with an ever increasing following and authored many books; *The Infinite Way, The Art of Meditation* and *The Contemplative Life* being but a few of his titles. At the time of our meeting he was staying at the Brown Palace Hotel; Denver's best. We talked of many things and he told me that he knew my guru and "loved him like a brother." Yoganandaji also initiated him into *Kriya Yoga* although Joel told me that he did not practice it anymore because his way was to go up into the crown chakra during meditation.

Master had also given Joel a key to his private apartment in Encinitas in case he wanted to rest and meditate there when my guru was not in residence. After Mr. Goldsmith and I talked for a while, at his suggestion we meditated. I was aware that he experienced the same physiological changes during meditation as does an accomplished yogi; his breathing slowed, his body relaxed and his attention flowed upward and inward. It seemed to me that Joel's way was more the way of a *Jnana Yogin* or the way of *Zen;* to bypass the psychic levels and become aware of the true nature.

One of my questions quite naturally had to do with just how an independent spiritual teacher makes provision for his daily needs and meets the expenses, which are

sometimes considerable. Joel smiled and spread his arms, as though taking in the universe, and said, "Why, Roy, it's all around you — just reach out and take it!" As he said this, just after our meditation session, his assurance seemed logical. An hour later as I returned home and took inventory of my "visible" assets I knew the conflict that can sometimes arise in a person's mind when one contemplates "all that the Father has is mine" versus the "facts" at hand. But, I knew Joel was right. It took months and years of meditation, unfoldment and experience before I really came to the place in consciousness where I could live *from* the realization.

A few weeks after our meeting an autographed copy of Joel's latest book arrived in the mail. Over the years, until his passing, we exchanged occasional letters and met two or three more times in various parts of the country. His work continues through his books, tape recordings and classes which are conducted by various representatives.

Several months were next spent in lecturing and conducting classes in Seattle, Portland and Los Angeles. In this latter city I remained for some time and, while there, met and talked with other leaders in the field: Manly P. Hall of the Philosophical Research Society; Ernest Holmes, founder of Science of Mind Institute and author of *Science of Mind* textbook which is used in all Religious Science churches; Neville, a most impressive teacher and author of many books dealing with creative imagination and mystical interpretation of scripture; and, Walter C. Lanyon whose gift for spontanous expression and direct challenge to a God-conscious life was remarkable.

At the time, Neville's lectures were most appealing and I attended twice weekly meetings at the Ebell Theater on Wilshire boulevard for some time. Through him I came into the realization of the true nature of consciousness as that which can be formed according to the mental impress given during quiet sessions of inward imagining. It was a practical step in the right direction for me.

During the latter 1950's I travelled extensively throughout the United States; Florida, New York City, Washington, D. C., Philadelphia, the midwest and California. I was then, as now, interested in reaching all who were open to the message and so accepted invitations from almost any group which would sponsor me.

I came to understand the *desire to know* which people in all walks of life express through their individual ways of seeking truth. Many, I noticed, were confused because of having been exposed to so many conflicting theories. Others were looking for an *authority* upon which to rely. During these years, because I found I could do it easily, I combined counseling with *intuitive reading* and became known in some parts of the country as a reputable *psychic*. I have always been intuitive so it was easy for me to counsel a person in need and, after a few minutes of meditation, *get impressions* regarding subconscious desires, conflicts and problems and incidents relating to their past experiences. Then I would advise a course of positive action and give instruction in meditation methods. Though I seldom *predicted,* some of my minor prophecies did come true. When one's desire pattern is known, unless the person is willing to change his outlook, attitude and level of awareness his general life pattern is predictable, even to small details.

One day, in New York City, after having worked with several people in succession who wanted *readings* instead of practical advice, I decided to change my method of counseling. Even though I continued to use intuition to get to the roots of a person's problems I did not advertise this. When it became known that I desired to serve as a *spiritual counselor,* instead of as a *psychic reader,* my appointments for personal sessions dropped off — allowing me more time to write and meditate.

All competent truth teachers have a natural psychic ability but seldom will they display it; they choose, instead, to work with serious seekers on the path rather than to

cater to those who seek demonstrations of soul ability in order to satisfy their curiosity. I feel we render a greater service in the long run if we show people how to find their own solutions to problems rather than have them depend upon us for *instant advice.*

Radio and television *talk shows* are other media I have often used; over one hundred such appearances have been made in the past ten years. For the most part I have gotten along extremely well with the various hosts, some of whom have been: Long John Nebel, Joe Pyne, Steve Allison, Pamala Mason, Larry King, Morgan Beatty and Bill Smith. Those involved with these media will testify that a great interest is shown by the listener-viewers when a guest on the show speaks on such topics as yoga, ESP, astrology and meditation. After an hour-long panel discussion television show with Neville, Dr. Donald Curtis and Margaret Wilson in Los Angeles, our host Mr. Lindy of the Lindy Pen Company, informed me that the show drew the largest audience response of any he had sponsored up to that time.

Invariably, when we "open the phones" we receive telephone calls from religious bigots who ask no questions but try to rebut my views and get a personal "sermon" on the air. And, dozens will have "true psychic experiences" to relate. It is not unusual for lecture sessions to be "standing room only" following a late-night radio interview. One of the most unusual happenings relating to a radio interview took place some years ago when *Frederick Fell, Inc.,* my New York City publisher, brought out a new edition of one of my books. I called Long John Nebel in that city and arranged for an interview.

An interview on Long John's show is a marathon, five hour session, during which time the guest is confronted by a panel. Things often get very lively, indeed! During the night of the appearance on Long John's show, which was broadcast over Radio WOR, we discussed a wide variety of matters relating to the meta-

physical-occult field. Longtime friend, Eden Gray, was on the panel; which made the evening more congenial than usual. The next night I confronted a packed lecture room in the Steinway Concert Hall building on New York City's fifty-seventh street.

Following the meeting a young man came forward and told me of the circumstances leading to his attending the lecture. He was new in town and, the night before, had been invited to a party. Finding the party not to his liking he returned to his room at the local Y. M. C. A., then took some papers down to the disposal area. There he saw a used radio which someone had discarded and decided to take it to his room and tinker with it. After a few minutes he got it in working order and the first message he received as he tuned the radio in was, "Hello — this is Long John and tonight we have as our guest, Roy Eugene Davis, who will be talking about yoga, meditation and the powers of the human mind." The young man listened, from midnight until five a.m. — and came to the meeting that night!

Another incident comes to mind. In June, 1970, I concluded a series of talks at the Psynetics Foundation in Orange, California. A dear friend and co-worker, Dennis Norlin, drove me to the Los Angeles International Airport at the midnight hour, as I was due in Denver the following day. Enroute to the airport Dennis and I discussed plans for future publicity in California.

A couple of hours later, as the plane carried me to Denver, I thought about the earlier conversation and remembered that Melvin Belli, famed San Francisco attorney, hosted a television interview-show in his city: I made a mental note to contact him. The next morning, just before noon, as Dr. R. Eugene Nichols, of the Denver *Science of Mind Church,* and I sat in the lobby of the television station prior to a scheduled interview, who should walk in but Melvin Belli! He was in town on business and had been invited to appear on the same

show as I. We had a mutually enjoyable time. Just one of life's coincidences.

Yoganandaji often said, to me and other ministers, "Don't be upset if large numbers of people don't come to your meetings now. Prepare yourselves. In the future, millions will come and there will not be enough teachers to meet the need." I have seen his words come true. Years ago my meetings were attended by a few dozen or one hundred or two hundred people. Now it is not unusual for audiences of two, three and five hundred (or more) to attend. The size of the audience is no indication of a teacher's stature. Some draw large crowds and have little of worth to say to the people while others draw a few and have much to say. Dr. Ernest Wilson of Unity Temple, Kansas City and the late Emmet Fox of New York City are two exceptional examples of truth teachers who brought in the multitudes *as well as delivered the goods.*

Early in my ministry I realized the importance of the printed word as a means of reaching people. The printed word does not wear out, it can be passed from hand to hand, it is available when one needs help and it can go to the far ends of the earth at a fraction of the cost of sending a person. It can speak to generations yet unborn. My first literary attempt was *Time, Space and Circumstance* — a collection of early lecture notes compiled in simple form. When I presented the manuscript to a New York City publisher I was politely informed, not without reason: "You are young and unknown," and, "perhaps the book won't sell enough copies to pay for the manufacture of it." A *rational evaluation.* But, just the same, this title has been distributed in the quanity of over twenty thousand copies to date.

I felt the book would be well received. I acted as my own publisher and made arrangements with a printer in the city to manufacture it. The first one thousand copies sold out the edition in less than thirty days after publication and another printing of three thousand copies

was contracted for. These, also, sold out the edition in just a few months. I then turned the publication rights over to *Frederick Fell, Inc.* who has kept the title available.

In rapid succession I wrote *Secrets of Inner Power, How You Can Use the Technique of Creative Imagination* and *This Is Reality.* Other titles have followed, usually at the rate of one book per year. I have sometimes wondered (budding writers take note), what would have happened if I had accepted the original publisher's opinion and had not taken the initiative to see my writings into print? This experience is, to me, an example of one of the basic metaphysical laws: if we have a dream and if we are willing to use our imagination and put forth the effort we will surely find success! The same Intelligence which prompts us to have a worthwhile goal (or dream) will also see to it that the desired end is realized; if we do our part and step forth with faith.

I am convinced that, too often, we are prone to give up easily or listen to the advice of others who do not share our dreams. Or, we expect others to do what we *can* and *should* do.

Writing has always come easily to me and I have no formula to offer to others except from my own experience. I first get a mental picture of the completed project, then I outline the book and sit down and write it through as directly as possible. When I am *in the mood* there is a flow — as thoughts, insights and realizations flood my mind. When I am not in the mood but have agreed to write an article or a book I write every day for several hours and, in time, the flow starts. For best results I start with chapter one and write on through to the final chapter and usually do a book length manuscript in two or three weeks. Then, after editing and making marginal notes to myself, I rewrite completely.

In giving advice to authors and would-be authors I can only speak from personal experience; everything I

have ever written for publication has been published as soon as the manuscript was ready for the publisher. I have often used inner guidance to contact the right publisher. This may not be a practical approach in this day of literary agents but it works for me and my relationship with publishers has always been excellent.

In 1960 I was ordained as a minister of Divine Science. I did not apply for this. I was speaking for the Divine Science Church in Washington, D.C. during the minister's summer vacation and was invited to accept ordination. After speaking for the headquarters Church in Denver and, after talking with the members of the board, I was ordained on the basis of my background, experience and understanding of truth principles. I am grateful for the opportunity to have been associated with Divine Science but my way of teaching is too broad to be contained within the framework of an organized group.

However, over the years I have worked in cooperation with many New Thought groups; Unity, Religious Science, Science of Mind and various smaller independent organizations. I have also talked to well attended meetings at Camp Chesterfield, the largest Spiritualist camp in the country. I am a truth teacher and work with people who are interested in a higher, better, way of life regardless of their affiliation. Large audiences have attended lectures and classes at Unity Church of Chicago, Christ Church Unity in San Diego, Religious Science Church in Laguna Beach and Science of Mind Church in Denver, to name just a very few. I consider it a real priviledge to work with ministers and members of these organizations.

Some years ago it used to be that the New Thought groups presented an *exclusive* message. To be *in* one had to take prescribed courses and learn phrases, words and attitudes peculiar to the group affiliated with. Members would agree that other groups "had their good points" but often acted with smug self-assurance and felt their own way was the best. While this is still true in some

quarters, today we find both teachers and students becoming more broadminded and more universal in philosophical outlook.

Of course, from time to time, *borderline* sects and movements, organized for purely commercial reasons, come on the scene. The sad thing is that beginning students cannot tell the difference between the truthful workers in the field, vs. the commerical venders. Among the commercial organizations the teaching is often basically sound — but the methods used to promote, and the distorted ideas presented to make the system *unique*, mar an otherwise useful presentation. Thousands of people join what they think to be an authentic occult organization, only to find they have been deceived or, remain blind adherents to the aims and ideals. A note here for readers: if an organization claims to be the custodian of ancient *secrets* and backs up the assertion by producing *evidence* of documents, symbols, passwords and signs — be very cautious. And, if the organization's leader claims to be in telepathic communication with masters from Tibet, Jesus or others — be even more cautious. Better yet, avoid them.

There is a basic truth which man can know and which can transform his life if he will become the embodiment of it. Everything else is window dressing and is, therefore, superficial and useless. Without judging, I feel safe in saying, that hundreds of thousands of people are confused because of the mass of data which has been literally thrown at them from pulpits, through articles, books and direct mail solicitations. I meet hundreds of people each year who have been *New Thoughted, Mind Sciened, Eckankared, Rosicrucianed, I Amed, White Brotherhooded, Scientologied* and, yes, even *yogied* — to the point of mental numbness. Some are ready to chuck the whole project of soul realization and others, thankfully, are ready to come out from the maze of conflicting opinions into the clear light of direct knowledge.

Some years ago I had lunch with a man, who has since become a close friend, who welcomed me to his apartment in New York City with: "I understand you were one of Yogananda's disciples? What did you learn? Can you levitate or materialize things? When I replied in the negative he responded with: "What was the point of it all, then?" I knew he was just testing me because of his own interest in parapsychology. This man knows the importance of soul discovery but many do not; they are caught up in the study and research of the strange, the unusual and the supernormal.

Ever since *A Search for Bridy Murphy* hit the book stores in the middle nineteen-fifties the publishing business has counted on selling a few hundred thousand, if not a few million, books which deal with various aspects of occult science. Jeanne Dixon, Peter Hurkos and scores of lesser known *prophets* have consistently made news because of their *predictions.* There are even *book clubs* which specialize in tomes dealing with ghosts, astral travel, witchcraft, flying saucers, psychic healers and mediumship. And the magazine racks are loaded with similar offerings.

I can say, *with authority,* that there are more fascinating and meaningful experiences to be perceived by one on the spiritual path than can be encountered through investigating or, dabbling, on the fringes of the paranormal. What most competent researchers have been trying to *prove* has been known for centuries by the seers of Egypt, India, Europe and America.

Seldom does harm come to one as a result of casual experimentation with table-rapping, dowsing, aura reading and parlor games involving ESP experimentation. The use of hypnosis to *recall* past incarnations, efforts at mediumship or attempts to contact astral dwellers is fraught with danger for the unskilled, however; besides being worthless relative to one's spiritual unfoldment. Though I have met with it hundreds of times, I am still a bit nonplussed when confronted by a person who stares

into my eyes, with trusting innocence and a *will to believe,* who informs me, in all confidence, "Our group has made contact with Jesus, St. Germain and (or) a captain of a flying saucer."

I am of the opinion that one needs a guru to guide him past possible pitfalls on the spiritual path if he is to accomplish liberation in this incarnation. If not a guru, then at least, a level-headed spiritual counselor. Casual reading, for the purpose of being informed is, naturally, in order; over-fascination with irrelevant matters is a waste of time. The Buddha, Sri Krishna, Jesus and other en lightened souls stressed the importance of driving straight to the spiritual goal and of coming into the *full realization of Life here and now.* Some *researchers* take the stand that they are *learning* as a result of their investigations. And, let's face it, they may well be recording data for the use of future generations. The average student on the path has no such responsibility, however, his goal is to *know the truth* and rise free of the snare of *maya.*

A delightful story was related at one of our Florida seminars by Dr. Frances Farrelly, an outstanding person with great psychic ability. She told of how she once sat, with hundreds of others, in a meeting with Father Divine. Now and then a follower would get up and testify of blessings received and recite a story relative to a vision or some other psychic happening. Father Divine, with an understanding smile, would say, "That's fine brother, that's fine. *Now, come on up a little higher!"* I can only add — what you have perceived may be good and helpful but there are realms beyond and there is a *final experience* which awaits you!

Recent years have seen a greater outreach in my ministry; articles in large-circulation magazines in other countries, a greater quanity of books distributed and annual visits made to over fifty U. S. cities for the purpose of lecturing and conducting classes and seminars. In early 1971 I talked to an overflow audience at the University of West Florida, Pensacola, with students who

were attending a once-weekly series of classes in "The Psychology of the Occult." In April of the same year my wife, Carolyn, and I participated in a five-day seminar in the San Jose, California area with Gina Cerminara, Jack Holland and Milan Ryzl — to name just a few. Every year Carolyn and I conduct seminars at CSA (Christian Spiritual Alliance) headquarters on beautiful Lake Rabun in north Georgia. Other *retreats* and conventions are also attended. I find students at colleges and universities most responsive; in many ways they often seem way ahead of their elders in honesty, seriousness and willingness to become wholeheartedly involved.

For the most part, relative to my work, everything has *just happened.* Years ago I used creative imagination to *make* things happen. This is better than sitting idle. Now, because of my attunement with Life I find that *all doors are open!* I am ever reminded, from within, that it is not Roy Eugene Davis who is involved; it is destiny. True, I advertise and do my best under all conditions but there are *unexpected* opportunities which present themselves. We are all linked together for good. When we are not in tune — circumstances do not connect. So, I believe in *destiny.* I believe that we come into this world with a plan and a purpose and if we can work with this plan and purpose we will have free expression. If we cannot — we will be frustrated and be psychologically disturbed.

I do not mean to imply that we are effects of outside causes. We work, if we know how, in harmony with what is right and with what has to be done. I have witnessed too many coincidental happenings to believe that I am the solemaster of my fate; and I have experienced too many situations (through dreams and visions) before the actual physical materialization of them to believe that God alone controls. It seems to me, since we are Spirit individualized, we are working in harmony with a *grand design.* One who has been through similar

experiences will readily recognize what I am talking about. There is an interaction between Spirit and soul — yet, without doubt, they are one and the same.

It has also been my observation that truth students who participate financially and, in other ways, are the ones who progress on the path. I am not suggesting that spiritual insight can be purchased for a price; there is a deeper significance. It is a sign of definite spiritual awakening when a person stops trying to *get things from God through prayer, good works* or *holding the right thought.* As individualizations of Spirit we should know, once the mental-emotional blockages are removed, fulfillment and harmonious living with people, circumstances and things. An aware person knows he does not have to *work* to prosper. We have but to *see* that all things are available and are *now* provided and can be utilized to the degree that we can *accept* the realization.

Babaji once told a disciple, "Few people know that the kingdom of heaven fully extends to this plane." A truth teacher must be sure that all who come to him for instruction are fully informed as to this basic fact.

In our society money is a medium of exchange. That is a very simple explanation of the matter. We usually exchange time, effort and talent for money. We then give money to others in exchange for services or goods. For the average person money earned represents time and energy or that person's life. So, here is a question: "How much of your life is dedicated to world enlightenment, the uplift of your fellow man, or improvement of your world?"

The greater our soul realization the more we come to understand that our responsibility is to share, give and make wise use of available things. When I met Yoganandaji years ago I had no money to offer his work but I offered my life and worked several hours each day to further the aims of the organization. Since I have been an independent teacher I have never hesitated to spend money,

time and energy to carry this work to those who need it. Income from lectures and classes is used to pay for halls, newspaper advertising and transportation costs. Surplus, if any, is used to finance the publication of books and literature. I have never drawn a salary, received a guarantee or had private funds to draw upon. I have found, over the years, that my consciousness of the nature of Life has been the most dependable backing. My life is one of total involvement in this ministry. Years ago I learned, when I was *called* to this work, if I did my part and remained open to the activity of Life that I was only the visible instrument through which things happened.

It is traditional, for a student during initiation, to offer the guru something in return for initiation. After all, the guru is giving his life and consciousness; the least the disciple can do is assist him in spreading the message in a practical way. The key to proper understanding concerning the principle of giving is this: we learn not to rely upon externals but upon the Infinite which *appears* as all which seems to be external.

True giving is not a matter of giving with the expectation of receiving. True giving is a matter of our being able to be an open channel through which blessings can flow into the world. Master teachers do not work to manipulate the minds of others or to acquire things merely for the sake of acquisition. They stand as an example to others that God-realization is sufficient.

Another thing I have noticed, as has any other truth teacher, that the majority of seekers on the path tend to be problem-centered. True, more and more people these days are concerned with illumination of consciousness — but self-centered people abound. They have forgotten, in their efforts to overcome, that the way to freedom is to awaken from the *dream* of limitation. One reason for problem-centeredness is that some subconsciously know that as long as they have a problem they are excused from responsible action.

When I wrote *Secrets of Inner Power,* in 1964, several students who were proud of their spiritual advancement and who were interested in *higher things* — meditation, psychic experimentation and various aspects of the occult sciences — informed me that they felt I had written beneath myself. They could not understand why I had written a book on the practical application of basic principles to matters of everyday living. But, I had written the book for them, in particular, because I knew they were dealing with abstractions, while muddling through life under pressure and psychological conflict. The study of metaphysics is, for some, an escape from realistic involvement with life. Others are lulled into a false sense of security.

There should be no separation between the spiritual life and the material life. Living should be a total experience and we should be able to express our divinity in this world while relating intelligently with others. The *hereness* and *nowness* is what the spiritual life is all bout. And, we can live comfortably in our chosen social setting without compromising our principles and without clashing with other people. We do not have to escape to an *ideal* setting in order to realize Truth. The environment in which we work, day to day, will be ideal if we are right inside.

Much publicity has been given to the trend toward retreats, ashrams and cooperative communities. One must, of course, follow his own guidance in relationship to such matters. But, there is no guarantee that we will make rapid progress on the path just because we elect to live with others in a retreat situation. Of course, it is helpful for one to spend some time in a retreat at a quiet, out of the way place, for the purpose of uninterrupted study and contemplation — but I do not feel that a cooperative community is the answer. By living the right kind of life we can remain in our own community and infuse it with God consciousness. Besides, those of expansive vision know their home to be the planet and that all men are brothers.

Truth knows no barrier: basic facts of life are readily accepted by all men, regardless of cultural background, if presented clearly. One of the most gratifying cooperative relationships I have is with Dr. Masahara Taniguchi and his co-workers in the Seicho-No-Ie movement in Japan. The translation of Seicho-No-Ie is, "The Home or Infinite Life, Wisdom and Abundance." This organization has over three million members and has branches in Hawaii, California, Oregon (and other states in the U.S.) as well as Canada and South America. Dr. Taniguchi has translated two of my books into Japanese and arranged for their publication and distribution. I was able to repay his kindness in a small way by writing his biography, *Miracle Man of Japan,* which was published in 1970.

In 1964 I toured th major cities of Japan under the auspices of Seicho-No-Ie and spoke to audiences of over two thousand people in Tokyo, Kyota, Nara and other cities. My interpreter, Reverend Haruo Shibuya, conveyed my lectures to the Japanese people in their native language in flawless style. Later, when Mr. Shibuya became the minister of Seicho-No-Ie church in Honolulu, my wife and I were invited to tour the Islands for the purpose of speaking to other branches of the organization. It is a thrill to share the things of Spirit with these enthusiastic members of Dr. Taniguchi's work.

Early in 1970 another long-planned project came to completion; the publication of *This Is Reality* in the German language under the title, *Die Macht Der Seele.* Gustav Lukat of Miami opened preliminary negotiations with the German publisher during a vacation trip to that country and Mrs. Annemarie Leypold, who had been working with the publisher, offered to translate the book and did a masterful job of it. Mrs. Leypold also translates my articles for publication in the German magazine, *Esotera,* and has given talks in Europe based on *Die Macht Der Seele.*

For some years, study groups have met in many

communities of the United States. At these meetings our books are used as a basis of discussion and the sessions are also a time for deep group practice in the art of meditation. Many of these groups also work to spread the work in their areas. The San Jose group, headed by Arley Gaines, has been especially active; placing books in libraries, making literature available to new people and arranging for publicity when I visit their state.

Several hundred men and women comprise the *Inner Circle;* they send regular contributions to help meet the costs of publishing and advertising and I send these *Inner Circle* members a monthly lesson and a report on the progress of this work. *Truth Journal,* our monthly magazine, is mailed to several thousand people; most of these people are in the United States but copies are also sent to Canada, Mexico, South America, New Zealand, Australia, Africa, India and Europe. Free copies of *Truth Journal* are supplied to book stores and natural food stores and are given to customers. More than four hundred ministers and practitioners of Unity, Religious Science (and other organizations) also receive this publication regularly.

My major emphasis has always been to make available concise information so that students on the path could have access to reliable guidelines. Also, and this goes right along with the imparting of the *word,* I stress meditation and soul realization.

As I sit at my desk here in St. Petersburg, Florida I can look out through the window and see the sparkling waters of the bay, and just three hundred yards away is the Gulf of Mexico. My thoughts go out to people all over the world; inwardly attuned I clearly see them in the Divine scheme.

The average person seeing the books, magazines, recordings, lecture tours, active study groups and dedicated co-workers — sees but the external picture. The *internal condition* of things is, by far, most important

for it is from this condition that all things emanate. I *am ever reminded that there is but one Life and It is playing all the roles. It has a plan and a purpose and it is our responsibility to cooperate with this plan and this high purpose.*

Often, at night, I awaken in a meditative mood and turn my attention to students wherever they might be and bless them. I use my time alone, while flying to a lecture engagement, in a similar manner. I have also learned, after years of experience, how to remain inwardly aware of my real nature and of the nature of things and conditions (as Life expressing) at all times. As I have said earlier, this life is one to total commitment to an ideal. I had an excellent example of this kind of commitment in my guru, Paramahansa Yogananda, and I have been blessed to know many contemporary teachers and spiritual leaders who exemplify the same kind of dedication.

There are several spiritual leaders in this, and other, countries whose outer work is similar to (but not exactly the same as) mine with whom I have a rapport and between us there is quiet cooperation. I am conscious of the workings of Spirit through all channels and I see the slow, but sure, filfillment of the creative law of life coming into manifestation in the affairs of men.

Chapter Twelve

A PROPHECY OF THINGS TO COME

We know so very little about the universe in which we live. Historians cannot see into the pages of man's past on the planet much further back than five or six thousand years with any degree of certainty. Yet, we know earth has been inhabited by man for hundreds of thousands of years. And, surely, there are planets in nearby solar systems which are likewise inhabited by intelligent people; no doubt, people who are pretty much like ourselves. Man is not accident and the blueprint for human beings is basic, regardless of the planet upon which he resides.

In the not too distant future we may communicate with our brothers who share the universe with us and who may be no more than a few million miles away. With modern communication methods the miles can be traversed in a few seconds — or a few minutes, at most! Radio and television communication with people on other planets may be more feasible, in the beginning, than trying to transport bodies from planet to planet in space ships.

According to the masters of occult tradition we are presently coming into a *new era;* the dawn is breaking on the shores of man's consciousness and before us lies the promise of several thousands of years of accelerated progress — culminating in a true *Golden Age* fifty-

seven hundred years from now.* Our current efforts at space exploration were predicted centuries ago by astrologers. Custodians of the *secrets* during the Dark Age period informed initiates of events to come as well as recorded the *reasons* for the rise and fall of civilizations in certain books.

We live during a fantastic and important turning-point in man's evolutionary pattern. Over the past one hundred years we have come into the realization that only the concept of one world and one human community is reasonable; superficial differences must be dispensed with — in favor of understanding and mutual cooperation. Understanding and interaction must (and will) take place on all levels; business, politics, religion and the arts and sciences. The age of separate factions is past. Oh, there will be a few hold-outs — those who are not possessed of wisdom and who prefer to play the role of Titans; wrongly motivated men who use power for selfish purposes.

Darkness, however, cannot resist the light of truth. From age to age, when the need is greatest, bright and shining expressions of the Divine come on the scene to "set virtue on her seat again." There is a basic *goodness* in life which prevails, always. This is the *dharma,* the *creative law of life* which was infused into the fabric of nature at the first moment of manifestation millions of years ago. While this *primordial intelligence* is sometimes more evident in the lives of extraordinary persons it just as frequently makes itself obvious through *ordinary* men and women. We are but actors on a stage. We play our parts and, hopefully, do our best but there is *something* which the average person does not discern which is running the show.

Civilizations have come and gone over the centuries — often, leaving not a visible trace of their existence. Records have been kept, however, by the brothers of various

*For details concerning the 24,000 year Equinoctial cycle read the author's THE WAY OF THE INITIATE. CSA Press, publisher.

secret orders and are also available to anyone who can attune to the existing *memories* which have been filed and stored in the *universal subconscious mind.* Fragments of such memories have been kept in circulation though the myths and traditions of various peoples of the world. At the origin of most myths and traditions there will be found an important truth.

The last high point in the world cycle was twelve thousand years ago when *Atlantis,* ruled by nine benevolent philosopher-kings, was in full glory. At that time flying machines, laser beams, the control of gravity and a complete understanding of the nature of the universe as an electrical phenomenon was known and demonstrated for the welfare of people. An understanding of physical, mental and spiritual anatomy — as well as the inner plan for man's progress — was evident.

Civilization did not decline because of man's misuse of natural forces; though this seemed to be the outer cause. The patterns which man takes on the planet are due to a cosmic *happening.* I am more than happy to be able to state, in these pages, that we will continue on the upward way, We are, presently, at the beginning of an ascending cycle. There will be difficult times; wars and rumors or wars. And there will be a drastic alteration in the consciousness of people on this planet! Any observant person can see the signs; while walking down the street, reading the local and national news publications and by being aware of what is happening all around.

Some say we are heading into a Dark Age period. They do not understand the cosmic plan. It is not darkness which is coming — it is the dawn! Pessimistic people must surrender and adapt. We who can *see* can afford to be optimistic.

We naturally are concerned about such matters as; over-population, the poisoning of our environment, man's seeming unconscious urge for self-destruction and the slowness of people's awakening.

This, too, shall pass away.

Students ask me frequently: "Why, if the East is the custodian of so much wisdom, are conditions in that part of the world so chaotic?" Let us be reminded that great empires did once flourish in that part of the world, as elsewhere, but the masses all over the world became overcome with the weight of inertia during the last Dark Age cycle and subtle truths could no longer be discerned by them. The records have remained and the scriptures preserved for we who are now awakening to great possibilities.

Civilizations rise and fall just as seasons change, according to predictable patterns. But the *Vital power* and the *truths of life* remain ever the same. One may well ask why the multitudes in our present world do not more readily accept the basic doctrines herein presented — for they have been known and have been available for those who have eyes to see. Facts can remain but people must become aware of them and be able to incorporate them into their lives before change is made in the surface world and in the affairs of men.

It is my fervent hope that all who read these pages will be inspired to dedicate themselves more completely to living the true spiritual life, and will stand as examples to those who are yet to be awakened. The *Infinite Intelligence* will bring about the transformation needed but, how fortunate we are, to be able to make the decision to cooperate fully with the process!

I would suggest that the reader first make any needed changes in his life; put his environment in order, work creatively for some constructive purpose in society and engage in any necessary spiritual discipline. For centuries the sages have stressed, as the way to fulfillment: self-discipline, study of scriptures and inspirational writings, daily meditation and, absolute reliance upon the Infinite at all times. Then, become active with the organization or movement which seems, to you, to be the best — which works for the spiritual welfare of mankind. Support local

churches, groups and group efforts which have been set into motion for the purpose of helping members of the community know their relationship with Life. This support can be through personal involvement or through regular financial contributions. But, the important thing is to get involved! Participate! Be a channel through which the spiritual awakening of man can be more speedily effected!

There is only *One Life* and *One Activity* and as we consciously participate we find ourselves coming into a conscious awareness of the process. In this way our lives are enriched and we find ourselves becoming more universal in outlook and more expansive in consciousness.

For decades to come I will be in the forefront, along with others who are now active (and those who will come into this work); writing, speaking, traveling, cooperating and doing my inner work. The inner work is as important as the outer. What we are, is the best sermon, by far. We radiate to others. Through telepathy we reach the minds of people and assist them and, on a deeper level, we know ourselves as *God in action* and this spiritual realization helps to dispel the darkness from the mind and consciousness of those who are receptive. There are saints in seclusion who do an effective job of working to bring man to an awareness of his true potential.

Whoever you are, wherever you are — I salute you as *brother,* as *sister* — and bless you.

OM SHANTI, SHANTI, SHANTI — HARI OM, SHANTI

May Absolute Peace Pervade the Whole Universe